SCOURGE.

NOVEMBER 1, 1811.

To the Editor of the Scourge.

SIR,

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THE managers of the respective theatres appear to have exhausted every British material of public entertainment; and are compelled, in order to gratify the popular admiration of the uncommon and the wonderful, to visit the prisons of Spain, and the hovels of Kams-With as much pleasure, therefore, as can be experienced by one actor, at the failure of another, do I hasten to communicate the following outlines of a drama, which shall unite in its representation every requisite of moral instruction, and of scenic and pantomimical effect. The truth of the fable is above suspicion, the characters are of exalted rank and more than usual notoriety; the animals new to the stage, and the denouement unexpected! What more can be desired, than that a dramatic spectacle should be more authentic in its story than Henry the Fifth, more surprizing than Harlequin and Asmodeus, more splendid than the Exile, more picturesque than Timour the Tartar, and more diverting than the Knight and the Wood Demon. From the managers themselves, I expect no other reward than the pleasure of seeing my suggestions embodied on the stage; but from the two principal individuals of the dramatis personæ, I humbly presume that it may not be impertinent to anticipate " a fine lively turtle" with the alderman's compliments, and a snug sinecure of something less than two thousand per annum.

> I remain, Sir, Your Admirer.

THE EXPEDITION, OR VALOUR AND TURTLE.

Scene the first opens with a view of the English fleet of forty sail of the line lying in the Downs; the trumpets sound, the cannons rattle, and the English army of thirty thousand men are seen slowly descending the beach in order to embark on some secret and momentous expedition. Chat-ahm-oh, and Kah-zel-reh are distinguished on a rising ground, gazing on the spectacle: Kah-zel-reh delivers to Chat-ahm-oh a roll of instructions, on which the audience can distinctly read "Destruction of the direful foe;" "Downfall of Gallic treachery." These two illustrious personages now embrace; and to the tune of martial music Chat-ahm-oh is rowed on board his vessel; while Kah-zel-reh slowly retires behind the scenes; the former chaunting "I'll return renown'd victorious!" the latter humming Doodle-doo!

Scene the second changes to Woolwich: view of the dock-yard, and of a yacht on the stocks. Solemn music. Enter Kuhr-tizh, the destined commander of the yacht, accompanied by several attendants bearing a turtle, which is hoisted on board to the tune of "God save the King," while several barrels of strong ale, and about ten dozens of Madeira, are disposed of to the tune of "Rule Britannia." The vessel is now launched amidst the huzzas of the multitude; and the knight, in whose honour, and at whose command, all this preparation is displayed, mounts the ladder and ascends the side of the yacht apparently in great agitation. As soon as he has gained the deck he assumes a pathetic tone, and to the chorus of his companions pours forth the following verses to the tune of "Life's like a ship in constant motion."

Ah! little think the lazy lubbers, Who at Guildhall in state preside; What dangers, sorrows, griefs, and rubbers, Th' adventurous seaman oft betide! Sure he who first like me adventured To tempt the ocean's boisterous wave, His heart in brazen circlets centred, Felt more than aldermanly brave!

For me! tho' sons of sea may jeer, And talk of August's favouring gale, I know the seasons of the year, When ocean's mildest winds prevail.

When wintry storms convulse the ocean, Nor plates nor dishes still remain, The table shakes with boisterous motion, And cooky's labours are in vain:

'Tis sad to see the bright tureen,
Around its savory contents throw;
'Tis sad to see the peas so green,
From dish, like pattering hailstones, flow.

Give me the calm and peaceful weather, When the brimm'd chocolate won't spill; When the mild breeze scarce stirs a feather; And the bold punch-bowl holds its fill:

When favoring Venus waves her myrtle,
While toping friends may drink their wine,
While undisturbed I carve my turtle,
Or taste my oyster-sauce divine!

But should, oh! should the fates determine,
The clouds should darken, winds should bluster;
That I should cat my fur of ermine,
Nor more than three pound stomach muster:

Oh then ye goddesses and gods,
In vain my loss, shall H — deplore;
Smote with affliction's heavy rods,
He ne'er shall see his Billy more!

To him the diving-bell be sent, To grope beneath the stormy wave, To drag the liquid element, And from the sharks my carcase save.

And when I'm heaved to land, dear Shaw,
And in the cold ground safely spread,
Beneath my arms a turtle draw,
And write this distich o'er my head:

"Restored to land, this grave contains, Sir William in his robes so trim; Who feared, lest vexed at eating them, The hungry fish should swallow him."

Scene the third: the cabin of the British general: he takes out his repeater, looks mournfully at his watch which strikes the hour; and exclaims, taking at the same time a pinch of the best Maccabaw; "'tis three; these confounded Frenchmen will not permit one to sleep; and our own guns at work too! they might surely have waited till I had risen!" Enter his valet and two or three officers who inform him that the favorable opportunity offers of disembarking. Heexclaims impatiently, Well, well, I shall rise at five, and then we shall see about it! Exeunt officers; the valet assists him to rise and put on his nightgown. Just as he is putting his left hand into the sleeve a servant informs him that Sir William Curtis and a fine lively turtle are just arrived: the general starts up in a paroxysm of joy; puts on his slippers in all possible haste, and rushes into the state cabin, to which the scene changes. Here succeeds a most interesting interview They embrace, and drop-scene falls to the tune of "Heroes of equal worth, how sweet's your meeting."

Act. II. opens with a view of the island of Walcheren. Martial music. A city in flames; the British fleet pouring in broadsides: batteries playing against the walls of Flushing: the breach attempted and recovered: the dead and dying intermingled on the stage, and the air involved in smoke, through which the flashes of the cannon, cast an occasional and glancing light. The British troops are disembarking to the sound of martial music

and arriving at the scene of death in countless multitudes. At a distance is seen the British general and Sir William in a boat, rowing with unusual activity to the yacht in which the turtle is contained; Sir William ascends the sides to quick time, and orders his men to hold up the memorable turtle to the sight of the earl and his companions. The general displays evident signs of joy. and is so much engaged in looking at the turtle, as scarcely to take an occasional glance at the debarking army. At the same instant a whole regiment is swept down by the cannon of the enemy, and the turtle slips from the hands of the awkward sailors, and falls into the sea. The cries of the general and the knight, now mingle with those of the dying and discomfited. The troops are called off from the attack; all is mournful silence, and the general utters a soliloguy full of lamentations, and concluding with a solemn vow that he will not take Antwerp till after the recovery of the turtle.

Scene the second, a perspective view of the bottom of the sea. On this part of the spectacle the attraction of the piece will undoubtedly depend. This thinking nation has acknowledged the merit of the equinine performers, and why should not the docility, agility, ability, and every other ility of the piscine race be received with minor interest and applause? Enter first a large sea horse, and two sea mares, who dance a Scotch reel, to the singing of a sea nymph; several oysters lying about the stage, and gaping with astonishment; and the amusements of the place are guarded by a regiment of lobsters. In the midst of their revelry they are interrupted by the arrival of the tortoise, who is received with great reverence by the guards, but the rest of the company are much discomposed: the two mares gallop off, and the sea nymph trots out of sight, on the back of the sea-horse.

Act the third: view of the interior of Flushing; the houses on fire, the fortifications almost in ruins, and the dead and dying sprawling on the pavement. Several horses make their appearance on the stage, which after a duet, in which two of the principal inhabitants bewail the

miseries of an empty stomach, are inhumanly butchered. They stagger, groan, and die, in the most theatrical of all possible ways. No sooner have they sunk into everlasting slumber, than they are flayed alive; and eaten by the besieged, who roast their "tender" limbs on the ashes of their late habitations. At this moment the joyful intelligence arrives that a capitulation has taken place, and that plenty of boiled beef may be found on board the English fleet. The crowd disappears from the stage, and hastens to the beach.

Scene the second, the interior of the general hospital. The dead, the dying, and the wounded, on beds of iron. The groans of the suffering, the exclamations of the delirious, the laughter of the thoughtless and the profligate, and the authoritative tones of the medical attendants are beautifully intermingled with the music of the orchestra. A patient comes forward, and the following dialogue is happily and appropriately introduced.

Doctor. Come, let me feel thy pulse; thy lips are pale, Thy eyes are hollow, and thy limbs do shake, As tho' an evil conscience did afflict thee:

Say what these symptoms mean?

Patient. That rests with thee;
What my disease may be thou best can'st tell,
But I'm told that 'tis a desperate ague.

Doctor. An ague say'st thou? As for me I know not;
In camp diseases, I am no proficient,
Not having visited a camp before;
But if it be an ague I've no medicine
Wherewith it may be cured.

Patient. No medicine, doctor?

How's this! Has't thou no bark, I've heard 'tis good
In the cold shivering of the quartan ague:

Pray give me half an ounce.

Doctor. Would that I could;
But truth must out. Know'st thou the great Sir
William?

From London came he in his barge of state,
To greet our noble general, and with presents
His high respect and reverence proclaim:
'Mongst these rare gifts, a noble prize he bore,
A turtle lively as its owner's wit,
And not less weighty than his eloquence:
Oh! such a turtle! who could gaze upon it,
And feel not warmth of eager appetite,
To all good things must be insensible.
But disappointment follows oft desert,
And while our great commander thro' his glass
Ey'd the delicious monster: from the hands
Of those who held it to his eager view
It dropt! The sea's unfathomable jaw
Receiv'd what should have fill'd our general's maw!

Patient. What then?

Doctor. In the first impulse of his wild distraction,
He swore by all his military skill,
By all the wisdom of his Kah-zel-reh,
And all the valour of his lov'd Sir William;
That not to lodge in Antwerp's citadel,
Should any regiment dare, till he had found
The turtle so unfortunately lost!
E'en now neglecting every minor care,
With line and hook he sounds the greedy deep,
And soon, perchance, may draw the turtle up.
Till then our *warrants cannot be obeyed,
Nor arms, nor physic, bayonets, or bark,
Obtained can be. Such is the general's order.

Scene the third, the court of Neptune. Minuets and concerts by his principal attendants. The God of Ocean, seated on his throne, informs his counsellors that the time is at length arrived when the usurpations of Britannia shall be checked, and he shall be able to regain his former dominions. Already he reminds them has she dis-

^{*} Qu. Death-warrants ?

puted his empire, and assumed his power, from the shores of the Atlantic, to the regions of eternal ice, leaving to him and his faithful followers scarcely a place of courtly refuge. While Antwerp is safe he declares that he has yet some hope, and then relates the history of the general's oath, and the fate of the tortoise. His attendants are dispatched according to the usual mode, and the turtle being produced is immediately gobbled up by Neptune and his courtiers, who sing a chorus expressive of their admiration of its flavour, and of their joy at having rendered the siege of Antwerp impossible.

Scene the fourth; the re-embarkation of the sick. Blowing up of the basin of Flushing and evacuation of the island. Sailing of the fleet on their return. A dozen doctors dance a cotillion and Exeunt. Scene changes to the Thames: barge of Sir William; from the mast of which hangs a turtle, with a pendant, on which is inscrib-

ed " Lost, but found again !"

Scene the fifth. A dinner party discovered, cloth just drawn, and servants bearing the fragments of a turtle out of the room. Sir William proposes in a bumper "damn enquiries and success to turtle." Thunder and lightning; the ghost of the turtle appears, and ejaculates with due solemnity,

I am not the genuine turtle, Nor shall Antwerp e'er be thine!

Chat-ahm-oh is carried off in a fainting fit; Sir William's looks change from red to blue; the scene disappears, and the piece concludes with a fandango between Neptune and a sea nymph.

London, Oct. 22d, 1811.

ACADEMIES AND THEIR PROPRIETORS.

SIR,

With whatever pleasure a friend to his country may witness the progress of useful knowledge among the great body of the people, it is impossible that he can divest himself of some degree of alarm, lest the improvement of its understandings should be purchased by the corruption of its morals. The task of instruction is now undertaken by the most profligate and unprincipled of mankind, and academies, as they are vulgarly called, are transferred from one speculator to another, like other descriptions of disposable property: the swindler, whom public indignation has driven from the metropolis, retires into the country with all that extravagance has spared o his depredations on credulity, and purchases a school. The attorney, whose malpractices have exposed him to the animadversion of the bench, forsakes his regular calling to become the instructor of "a select number of young gentlemen;" and the literary poltroon, whose vices have rendered him the opprobrium of society, and the victim of unpitied indigence, condescends to inscribe that name which had hitherto been the ornament of many a titlepage, on the sign of an "Academy."

It is not of the ignorance so much as the depravity of characters like these, that the public has a right to complain. They are all capable of teaching something, and the acquisition of the first principles of knowledge, if his genius extend no farther, places the boys committed to their superintendence at an immeasurable distance above the unfortunate beings to whom these advantages are denied. It is not necessary, to produce an immoral impression on the minds of their pupils, that these men should directly encourage their depraved propensities, or that they should wilfully set them an example of flagitiousness. There is something in the manners and habits of a profligate refugee from the world sufficiently

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contaminating to produce a baneful effect on all who come within the circle of his influence. But even as far as regards their powers of instruction, it is deeply to be lamented that the expence and anxiety of those parents who confide their children to their care, should not be rewarded to the utmost possible extent; and that the time and expence which, properly employed, would render the pupil a correct and accomplished scholar. should only initiate him into an imperfect acquaintance with the first elements of literary knowledge. The youth who after remaining seven years at a common boardingschool, returns to his friends with a knowledge of the first four rules of arithmetic, an imperfect remembrance of the Etonsyntax, and a smattering of French, is considered as a boy of hopeful talents, and more than ordinary acquisitions.

Within half a mile of Kennington, we have no fewer than twelve academies for the instruction of young gentlemen, in every branch of learning, and every gentlemanly accomplishment. The discipline of the academy opposite me is as follows: About seven o'clock the boys are called to prayers; after prayers the usher looks over their themes, which he praises or condemns as may suit his caprice, and then returns to their owners with his corrections to be entered in a theme book; at nine, breakfast; from ten till one, attendance by the French master, who hears in that time thirty boys repeat their verbs and say their lessons: correction, therefore, and explanation are out of the question; one till three, dinner; three till five, writing and arithmetic. In writing they usually make some progress; but in arithmetic they are given a question, which if it be not answered that day, must be left till another. Between three and five also, the dancing master attends in an adjoining room. Half of the school are compelled to leave their studies to attend him; and in these two hours he contrives to teach twenty boys their five positions, and ten others the first step of the College hornpipe. From seven till eight, the boys are employed in laying aside their books, and preparing for prayers. At eight, supper and to bed.

The drawing and music master attend three times a week one hour each time. The regular routine of study is thus additionally interrupted, and the progress of the "young gentlemen" in these accomplishments may be easily conceived!

At the end of the quarter the average acquisitions of one of the pupils may possibly amount to the imperative mood of a French verb; the first position towards an Irish step; one rule in arithmetic; and a speech from Enfield's Speaker. A page of writing, called a "Piece," is filled up by the writing-master, and the admiring parents wonder at their darling's proficiency.

But it must not be supposed that because their acquisitions are so trifling, they are free from the discipline of flogging, or that because their indolence is indulged, their happiness is consulted. The cat-o'-nine-tails is used with sufficient frequency and severity, but it is always the instrument of capricious rage. The pupil is not flogged because he has done wrong, but because the master happens to be in a feverish humour. His scholars hate him, therefore, but do not fear him: and instead of being impressed with a sense of duty, or endeavouring to avoid future chastisement by the propriety of their demeanor, and the intenseness of their application, they are only hardened to perverseness by the consciousness that punishment equally awaits the innocent and the guilty; and that goodness and application are no recommendation to the favour of their instructor, any more than wickedness or indolence are the certain objects of his vengeance.

As an evidence of the manner in which such establishments are usually conducted, I beg leave to call your attention to the inclosed curiosities. They are taken from the theme-book of a relative who received his education under a Mr. ———, formerly a journeyman baker, but now the proprietor of an academy for a select number of young gentlemen in the immediate vicinity of a

certain cross, of whom, as well as of several worthy brethren, I shall send you some interesting particulars as soon as leisure shall enable me. Suffice it to say, that he has lately appeared in the character of an author, and that the pupil, of whom the subjoined theme is a last production, was lately sent to the university of Oxford. Happily his progress at that celebrated seat of learning will not depend on his knowledge of the French language!

Theme to be translated, given by Master -, of - Academy.

My dear Father,

I am very glad to hear that you are well, and assure you that I am the same. I am now making vast strides in my learning, and my master and mistress are very good to me. They asked me into the parlour yesterday, where I had some nice apples and walnuts. With love to sisters: so no more at present, from your loving son,

M.W.

The Boy's Translation.

(The master's corrections between brackets in italics.)
Mon Cher Pere,

Je suis tres joyeuse ouir [d'ouir] que vous etez bien; et je vous assure que je suis le même. Je suis [Je fais] a present, faisant [ont] grandes marches en mon savoir [mes lettres.] Mon maître, et [ma] maîtresse sont tres bonne au moi [à me.] Ils me demandoient [invitent] en la parleur hier ou avois [J'eu] des pommes, et des walnuts [fruits de walle.] Avec amour aux sœurs, et si non plus en present, de [a] votre fils affectioné.

M.W.

Et moi, Monsieur, Je dirai, si non plus en present a J. W.

Kennington, October 15.

ASHE'S TRAVELS AND THE SPIRIT OF THE BOOK.

Or, the History of a Diamond Merchant.

No man ever experienced the vicissitudes of fortune, or employed to a useful purpose the opportunities of observation that are afforded by vicissitude alone, without being deeply impressed with a conviction that the utmost depravity of principle may be combined with the most amiable feelings; that men whose conduct is governed by no maxims of moral rectitude, may be susceptible of the most sublime and most generous sentiments: and that it is possible to be brave, and liberal, and compassionate from the spontaneous impulse of natural emotion, without possessing that firmness of character, or being habitually impressed with those principles which afford the only security for permanence of virtue, and the only safeguard against the indulgence of the baser passions.

An individual may be endowed by nature with the utmost ardor of temperament, and the utmost sensibility of feeling, without having those qualities restrained, or directed by a regular and virtuous education. His friendships, therefore, will be warm but momentary, his first emotions will usually be on the side of virtue, but their operation will be transient and irregular; incapable of acting by any determined system, he will pursue that path to emolument and distinction which promises him the most immediate arrival at the object in view, without pausing to consider by what difficulties it is impeded, whether its course be lawful, or in what degree his progress infringes on the rights of others. Accordingly no character is more common than that of an individual who expends in acts of generosity, the money that he obtains by injustice. His feelings are humane, but his principles lax, or perverted; and without looking to the general consequences of his actions, he robs the rich to relieve the poor.

With whatever alarm the preceding observations may be considered by the well-meaning persons, who are accustomed to regard atrocity of character, as synonimous with criminality of conduct, it cannot be disputed that they form the most powerful evidence a priori for the necessity of revealed religion. They prove that the social feelings would not in any state of society be the source of virtue, unaided or unrestrained by some unerring and universal principles of conduct; that it is as possible to be as amiable as the light of nature can shew us to be,

without being useful to others, or happy in ourselves; and that distrust, and jealousy, and hatred, may prevail under every human authority, under the fairest forms of civilization, and not withstanding the most rigid administration of the most severe and immutable laws.

Of the dangers arising from defective education, the individual, to a sketch of whose career the preceding observations are preliminary, affords a melancholy instance. In the summer of 1810, a correspondent of the Scourge became acquainted with him under the name of Anville. and had many opportunities of bearing testimony to hisgenerosity of feeling, and to the social frankness of his While in great distress himself, he afforded pecuniary assistance to more than one individual, who had no claim on hiskindness but their necessities, and while the most indefatigable activity was demanded by the peculiarities of his own situation, he was unwearied in personal exertion for the happiness of others. Of convivial disposition, but temperate habits; at once ardent in pursuit of pleasure, and methodical in application; his caution attempered his vehemence, and his enthusiasm gave vigour to his purposes. That of such a man the subjoining facts should be recorded, is humiliating to the pride of human nature; nor should we have entered into a detail so much better calculated to gratify curiosity than to afford instruction, had not our correspondent adduced some reason to believe, that at the time of his appearing under the assumed name of Anville, he had become in some degree sensible of his errors, and had made some progress towards a sincere reformation, or had the account of him contained in a contemporary publication been distinguished by justice or correctness.

Respecting the early life of Captain Ash we know little more, than that he received his education in France, and was at one time a lieutenant in the Austrian service. Soon after the treaty of Leoben, a new system of discipline and regulation was adopted under the immediate superintendance of the Archduke Charles; and the person whose

memoirs we are now relating, whose military name it would be useless to conjecture, was suffered to retire upon a small pension. Soon after he left the Austrian territories, and returned to his native country. During the turbulent period that immediately succeeded, he is understood to have been an active agent of O'Connor; and the party, of which he undertook the support, being totally disorganized, he first came over to England, where we do believe that he was regarded with some degree of confidence by many respectable persons, and having collected a small sum through the kindness of his friends, took an

early passage for America.

In America it is probable, that he obtained the necessaries of life, partly by teaching French, and partly by correspondence in the newspapers. But whether he visited the Allegany Mountains, and the shores of the Mississippi, or saw any of the native Indians of whose manners he favours us with a description in his Travels. we have considerable doubts; that he engaged in many enterprizes, more remarkable for their boldness than their rectitude, is admitted even by his friends; and that all his projects ended in disappointment, is asserted by himself and corroborated by the sequel of his history. At the end of a five years residence in the United States, he found himself at Charlestown, without friends or prospect, and with four dollars in his pocket. His companion, a Frenchman, was in a state of destitution even still more deplorable; and these two unfortunate adventurers, rambled about the streets of Charlestown, alternately exhorting each other to fortitude, and pouring forth the lamentations of despair, when the united influence of fatigue and curiosity led them to a notorious tavern and gaming house. While Ash was pondering over his pint of wine, on the means of self-murder, his companion joined the croud at the gaming table. After remaining some time he returned, and demanded the loan of a dollar. The captain with gloomy reluctance complied with his request. In a few minutes he returned, and re-

peated his demand. Ashe, now excited to a pitch of desperation, threw upon the table the contents of his purse. while his companion returned to try his fortune with the three dollars that it contained. In a few minutes the captain was aroused from his reverie by the return of his friend who shook him by the hand, with the salutation of " Here,my old boy, we are made for ever," and presenting to him a green bag filled with dollars, proceeded to order a sumptuous entertainment. It is needless to add that they supped with unusual appetite. The next morning they proceeded to the harbour, and took a passage to England. They were detained, however, for many days. by the loss of the bag of dollars, so miraculously obtained. At length it was found in the trunk of an unfortunate wretch named Wilson, who had stolen it from beneath the captain's pillow; he gladly surrendered the property on condition of pardon, and with a hundred and thirty dollars each, the produce of the three last pieces in Ash's possession, they obtained their passage to the British shore, and were enabled to assume a respectable appearance on their arrival in Liverpool.

But Liverpool, while it abounded in temptations to extravagance, afforded little scope for the exercise of those talents which our hero was destined to display in other regions of the globe. In a few weeks he exhibited to his former companions a deplorable picture of hopeless penury; to gain the metropolis was his only apparent refuge from starvation, and with half-a-crown in his pocket, he bade adieu to the abode of quackery and inhumanity. When he arrived at Coventry, one shilling of his treasure was all that remained; and as he passed through the inn yard, the sight of half a dozen recruits had almost tempted him to enlist. His appearance was respectable, and he had been decently clothed by the The landlady was a buxom kindness of his friends. good-natured looking woman, and to her he disclosed his situation. She told him to " keep up his spirits," and informed him that he was "kindly welcome" to a dinner that was just about to be served up to the principal inha-

bitants of the town, who had met to celebrate the formation of a corps of volunteers. " Never mind the money," said she; " eat and drink as well as the rest of them; I'll frank you; and don't be afraid of your supper and a bed; you shall sleep here to-night, and tomorrow I'll give you a pound note, to keep you on the road. It is a pity that so fine a man should ever see distress. And as your handkerchief is a little dirty or so. why I'll lend you one of Tommy's." The captain was a man of gallantry, but all this was uttered with so evident a union of simplicity and benevolence, that he suffered the compliment to his person to pass unnoticed: in reality his thoughts were diverted to other objects. After the necessary preliminaries of shaving and brushing, she was ushered into the dining-room, where he found himself among forty or fifty of the "principal" inhabitants of that "ancient town."

The captain was placed on the left of the president, an attorney. After the cloth was drawn a subscription was proposed for a labourer who had fallen from the scaffold. and Anville threw his last shilling into the plate! As the punch continued to circulate, the company either divided into political parties, or sunk beneath the table; and about ten o'clock the captain found himself tête-á-tête with the president. To him, therefore, he revealed his distresses, and described his desperate situation. Mr. M. was a "good kind of man," though an attorney; he testified the most lively interest in his story, and suggested a variety of ways in which it might be possible for Anville to obtain a subsistence. At length it occurred to him that a school was much wanted by the more wealthy part of his neighbours. "You speak French," he observed, "extremely well, and seem to have a good deal of knowledge of one kind or other; it is a done thing; you shall be master of an academy. I shall frank you at the inn for a week, in that time I shall be able to procure you a number of scholars, and your further success will depend on your own good conduct," The next morning the attormey exerted himself among his club companions, while Mrs.—, a fashionable milliner, undertook the labour of a regular canvas among the ladies, and at night the benevolent lawyer returned with a list of forty scholars at two guineas a quarter.

Herehe might have continued respectable and contented during the remainder of his life, had he not been cursed with a tolerable person. His admission indeed to scenes and societies from which pedagogues are usually excluded, had led him into expences unbecoming his situation, and disproportionate to his income; but the difficulties to which this misconduct subjected him might have been easily overcome, had not the wife of an opulent tradesman at whose house he frequently visited, become enamoured of his person. That no criminal intercourse took place, we can assert from the best of all possible authority, that of the lady herself. But the jealousy of the husband and the suspicions of his fellow townsmen, were but too evident in the desertion of his school, and, overwhelmed with debt, and pursued by the clamours, however undeserved, of the inhabitants, he made a precipitate retreat from the birthplace of Peeping Tom, and sought concealment in the neighbourhood of London, where he reassumed the name of Ashe.

The exploit which we are about to record is of a nature so extraordinary, that were not its truth established beyond the possibility of scepticism, and capable of corroboration by the parties who became the victims of deception, we should not hazard our credit with the reader by the relation of circumstances apparently so incredible. The court of Portugal having emigrated to the Brazils, Lord Strangford was appointed envoy to Rio Janeiro. About a month before his lordship's departure from this country our hero took his passage for Madeira, in the capacity of private secretary to that nobleman; at one of the Canary islands he found it convenient to remove on board of an American vessel, and on his arrival at Rio Janeiro, he assumed the character of envoy. By means

of forged letters he obtained an accredited reception from the court, and in his official capacity, he purchased about fifty thousand pounds worth of diamonds, for which he paid by bills on Hammersley and Co. After defrauding the good people of Rio Janeiro to as great an extent as was consistent with policy, he obtained a farewell audience of the regent, and shortly after set sail on his return to England. He touched in his passage at all the minor Canary islands, and levied contributions to a considerable amount in wines and cotton. At Madeira he obtained goods to the amount of three thousand pounds on a Mr. Reid, besides several minor purchases of value, from other inhabitants. At all these places he was received with the utmost deference and admitted to the first circles of society. He was an Englishman, and a representative of the English court, and this was at once a claim on the hospitality of the Portuguese government. and on the respect and confidence of the natives .-- At length having preyed on the credulity of the diamond the cotton and the wine merchants in this quarter of the globe, he resolved to be content with his good fortune, and to return in the lull tide of prosperity to England. His intention, as he explains it himself, was to dispose of his cargo on his arrival in the Thames, to take up the bills on Hammersley, and to retire on the surplus of his speculation. That this plan would have fully answered his purposes, and was indeed the only one that he could hope to execute, does not palliate its guilt. No one doubted the intention of Dr. Dodd, to replace the money of which he attempted to defraud Lord Chesterfield; yet Dr. Dodd was not considered as a fit object of the royal mercy .-- Contrary breezes detained him off the mouth of the harbour, and the very winds that delayed the departure of the charge des affaires, wafted Lord Strangford into port! The imposture was now discovered; the ship was detained, its cargo confiscated, and the diamond merchant cast into a dungeon.

Here he remained six months, excluded from the light

of day, in the utmost extremity of suffering. The dungeon was small, and divided between him and an unfortunate wretch who hourly expected to be put to death. Such was the noxious situation, and so confined the limits, of their cell, that they could only sleep alternately, the one fanning away the musquitos while the other indulged in repose. At length his companion was removed, and his intercourse between him and his guard became more frequent and unrestrained. When the captain was seized he had the presence of mind to conceal a diamond in his fundament. With this last resource he prevailed over the fidelity of his keeper, who obtained a passage for himself and the captain on board an American vessel, which bore them from the power of the Portuguese government, and landed them at Gravesend.

During his residence at Coventry he divided some portion of his leisure in compiling an account of his travels through America. Whether he ever visited the scenes that he describes we have before observed to be more than doubtful, and were the external evidence of his credibility as a traveller of a nature less suspicious, the internal evidence is too well calculated to excite distrust. The manuscript, however, of whatever value it might be, was purchased by Sir Richard Phillips, and in the beginning of the year 1809, exposed to the public eye, under the form of three handsome duodecimos, and under the title of " Travels in America, performed for the purpose of exploring the rivers Alleghany, Monongahela, Ohio and Mississippi, and ascertaining the produce and condition of their banks and vicinity, by Thomas Ashe, Esq." In the preface to this work the public are informed, that the writer is then on his return to America: by this stratagem the creditors who had known him under the name of Ashe, were so far deceived as to think all enquiry after him unavailing; but instead of crossing the Atlantic he remained in the neighbourhood of Lambeth, and supported himself by occasional correspondence with the newspapers, under the name of Anville. At length he became connected with Mr. Blagdon of the Phœnix, and on the reversion of that paper to other hands, undertook the principal management of Blagdon's Weekly Political Register, a work more remarkable for violence than energy, and better calculated to shew the spirit of political intolerance in all its deformity, than to benefit the cause in which its proprietors were engaged. Its circulation was only temporary, and on its demise, he reassumed the editorship of the Phœnix, of which till very lately, we believe him to have possessed the exclusive management.

During the greater part of the year 1810, he resided in the neighbourhood of Chelsea, and only appeared in town, at the dusk of the evening, and under the pressure of urgent business. What recommendations he may have had during this period, to the notice of the great, it is difficult to conjecture, but that he received considerable pecuniary assistance from persons in confidential situations at St. James's, we have the most cogent reasons to believe. In the beginning of January last, he ventured to town, to pay his respects to one of his benefactors, and encountered at Charing-cross, the man whom of all others he had least wished to see, Mr. Reid of Madeira, holder of a large proportion of his fictitious bills, who had that day arrived in London, chiefly for the purpose of discovering him. Mr. Reid seemed willing to compromise the matter in an amicable way, and asked him to dinner; but while they were over their wine, the police officers disturbed the conversation, and Ashe alias Anville was taken before the Lord Mayor. Here he underwent nine examinations, in all of which he displayed considerable talent and exemplary firmness. At length he succeeded in proving to his lordship, that the acts of which he was accused having been committed in the Portuguese dominions, were without his jurisdiction, and the prosecutor being thus disappointed in his design of bringing him to criminal punishment, proceeded against him civilly, and lodged him in the Bench.

While engaged in the management of the Phænix,

business led him occasionally to the house of Mr. Blag. don; into the hands of that gentleman, a copy of the evidence on the delicate investigation was committed for revisal. Anville gained, by snatches, a knowledge of its contents, and after each visit committed his observations to paper. On his committal to the Bench, he manufactured his memoranda into three volumes, duodecimo, which he afterwards published under the title of " The Spirit of the Book." In this work there are many examples of bad taste, and much unmeaning declamations: his language is destitute of ease and precision, and he is frequently pompous where he wishes to be pathetic. As the incidents of the real story are comparatively few. the necessity of filling the three volumes, has rendered his narrative tedious and languid. But on the whole the work is superior to the every-day novels founded on fact. and is fully entitled to the praise that we formerly bestowed upon it. It is but just to add that the person subscribing himself A late Possessor of the Book, Vide Scourge, Vol. II. p. 68. was not at that time acquainted with the identity of Ashe and Anville.

His confinement in the Bench was in all probability the most fortunate circumstance that could have befallen him. For the Spirit of the Book, he received two hundred guineas and a release for two hundred more. Sir Berkely William Guise, the object of whose visits it does not become us to explain, afforded him pecuniary assistance; from the writer of a celebrated pamphlet he received 1501. for revisions and corrections, and from the respectable proprietor of the Phænix, he must have obtained considerable sums. At length the insolvent act was passed: the captain appealed to the clemency and humanity of his creditors; and pointed out to them the cruelty of detaining him in prison, without the hope of extrication, while so many of his fellow prisoners were restored to freedom. His appeal was successful; they took his notes of hand for five shillings in the pound; and immediately on his discharge he contrived to elude

their vigilance, and has not since been heard of. Whether he still remains within the circumference of his majesty's dominions, or be proceeding on another voyage to America, is only interesting to his creditors. The intelligence of his disappearance must have been received with more vexation than surprise: they knew already what reliance could be placed on his honour, and it would have demanded a stability of principle and a rectitude of feeling, much greater than falls to the lot of common men, to forget their endeavours to inflict upon him the last punishment of the law. At any rate his history may impress on the mind of those individuals, to whom these pages may recal his memory, many useful lessons of conduct. If secrecy, activity, temperance, and regularity, have saved from destruction a man so destitute of religious or moral principle; how much will the same qualities and the same habits contribute to the success, and add to the brilliance of rectitude and honesty! and if with all his native generosity of feeling, and all the qualifications of the man of business, his derelictions and irregularities have counteracted all the natural effects of his industry, what stronger argument can be afforded for our perseverance in those virtuous and honourable paths, which not only afford us the most certain prospects of ultimate affluence and respectability, but even when they fail of leading us to the summit of our wishes, are never looked back upon with any feeling of repentance?

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT TOWARDS MEN OF LETTERS.

SIR,

Though differing from you very essentially in my political views, and entertaining a very different opinion of public men and public measures, from those which have distinguished the pages of the Scourge, I cannot but

admire the moderation with which you espouse the popular cause, and the impartiality with which you investigate the most important questions that present themselves to the national attention. It seems to be imagined by the other writers of the day, that to espouse the cause of reform is inconsistent with our approval of the war in the peninsula; that the man who declaims against corruption must necessarily be an opponent of every measure adopted by government; and that to assert the liberty of the press. while you admire the talents of Lord Wellington, is the acme of absurdity and hypocrisy. In other words a literary partizan must never exercise the faculty of discrimination; he must blend the good and evil conduct of his political adversaries and of his patrons in one collective censure; he must confound individuals with principles; and judge of every political measure, not by the guidance of reason, but according to the wishes and interests of his party. That you have escaped the general contagion, is one great motive for my addressing you in particular on a subject of considerable interest, to the party under whose auspices I have hitherto pursued my political career, and to that numerous class of literary individuals which is dependant on the Pittite party for the reward of its present exertions, and the encouragement of its future labours.

It appears evident from the overt acts of the present ministry, that they have deliberately and decidedly adopted a peculiar system of conduct towards political literature, from which nothing but the most sensible experience of its impolicy will induce them to diverge. They have resolved to own "no argument but force," and instead of pursuing the Walpolian plan, of encouraging men of talents to overcome their antagonists in literary warfare, they have adopted an apparently incorrigible opinion, that it is better to prosecute the popular journalists than to answer them. Acknowledging, by their legal measures, their conviction of the formidable influence of the press in one direction, it never occurs to

their consideration, that its power might be rendered equally formidable in the other, and that if the preachers of sedition obtain a dangerous ascendancy over the minds of the people, the supporters of social order, or the existing administration, require only the same facilities to produce the same effects. The Burdettites are supported by their party, and their example might have taught the ministers the necessity of adopting a similar policy. Had they encouraged some able partizan to refute the ribal-dries of Cobbett, they would have served the cause of the public and themselves much more substantially than by sending him to Newgate.

In common cases prosecution only fills the purse of the offender, and exalts his reputation. By proceeding against the Hunts, the attorney-general has trebled the sale of the Examiner, and raised the most simple of all literary drivellers into some degree of popular estimation: by persevering in his efforts he has transformed Mr. Drakard into a public man, and forced the Stamford News into extensive circulation. Mr. Finnerty is overwhelmed with pecuniary embarrassments, and sinking into association with the very lowest orders of society; he is sentenced to confinement in Lincoln gaol, and he immediately becomes a man of consequence: is hailed as the champion of the freedom of the press; is relieved by a subscription that will pay his debts and his expences, and leave him a considerable surplus with which to resume his career: and will return to his former avocations with a power of doing mischief, and of promoting his personal advancement, that, but for the indiscretion of Lord Castlereagh he would never have possessed.

The neglect of literary merit on the part of the ministry has an injurious operation, not merely because men of talents do not exert themselves in their cause, but because neglect is followed by desertion, and those who cannot obtain either profit or honour on the right side of the question, will espouse the wrong. Human nature is frail, and authors must eat as well as prime ministers. The ministry therefore not only lose the services of men

of genius and eloquence, but find them marshalled against them in a phalanx that all the terrors of Sir Vicary will never be able to dismay.

A similar system is pursued by every individual connected with the government. In your eighth number you gave an account of a Colonel F. the editor of the Military Magazine. Whether that account was correct I am unable to ascertain; but the personal demerits of the individual, though they may be a proper object of moral satire, or even afford a plausible reason for disclaiming his literary services, can by no means justify the Duke of York, or the members of the government, in appearing to sanction his labours, and leaving them after their completion, to be their own reward; nor if even the contrary should be admitted, will government stand acquitted when it is known that they made no inquiry into his personal history, but disclaimed him without any inquiry at all. The captain established the Military Magazine under the express sanction of the Duke of York, and has now conducted it for many months without one smile of encouragement from that exalted personage, or one mark of attention from any dependant of the minister's. To say that the work is badly written is to say nothing: no individual connected with public affairs thought proper to examine into its merits, and Fhas expended some hundreds of pounds, and involved himself in considerable embarrassment, without the slightest intimation of encouragement. Had the magazine been written with the eloquence of a Cicero, and the spirit of a Burke, there is no reason to suppose that his fate would have been different.

The Pittite system, and the measures of its supporters, are at present entirely dependant on the friends and colleagues of those Dutch commissioners and other worthy gentlemen, who obtained the rewards of their stupidity during the glorious days of anti-jacobinism, or on individuals who are in possession of public offices, obtained for merits of a different nature from those which ought to distinguish the literary partizan, and to whom the task of political

writing has always been a secondary, incidental, and gratuitous employment. These are not the men to sway the opinions of a nation, or to counteract the exertions of the Cobbetts and the Whites. Objects of so much importance can only be accomplished by men whose profession is literature, excited by the hope of future reward, and encouraged by present testimonials of the sincerity of their patrons. When ministers are once convinced that to patronize such characters is better than to dabble in exofficios, it will not be difficult to find them.

A MINISTERIALIST.

NOTORIOUS CHARACTERS; OR, NEW ROADS TO DISTINCTION.

SIR,

As many of your country readers are in all probability aspiring young men, more remarkable for a laudable ambition to become notorious, than for an acquaintance with the most approved modes of gratifying their wishes, and as it is really a pity that such hopeful young gentlemen should be obliged to have recourse to the Spectator, and Ackerman's Repository for their ideas of life and manners: permit me, through the medium of your publication, to present them with a few sketches of those among us, who are generally admitted to be foremost in the fashionable list of notorious characters; and to describe for their edification a few variations and improvements in eccentricity which have been adopted since the dog-days.

The rusticated youth who wishes to personate the truebred fop should take for his model the Hon. and accomplished author of the Epistle to Miss Tilney Long. To drawl out his words as if his tongue and teeth were just recovering from the sulkiness of a matrimonial quarrel; to display his ivories as often as an excuse for doing so is afforded by the shadow of a joke; to prune

and decorate with exemplary care a narrow border of artificial whiskers; to move along as if his arms were suspended on wires, and his heels drawn to the earth by the force of magnetism; are habits and peculiarities of indispensible necessity to his provincial imitator. Trowsers in the depth of winter, half a dozen waistcoats in the height of summer; silken pumps, and an apology for a hat at all seasons of the year, and in every variety of weather, will contribute to the perfection of the resemblance. After these preliminary decorations, it will be necessary for the youthful aspirant, to obtain a superficial acquaintance with dramatic literature; to interlard his discourse with à-propos quotations, in pronouncing which he must lay aside the drawl and assume the lisp: to select the most appropriate phrases in use at the time of the Spectator, such as "upon honor," "I profess," "I protest," &c. &c.; and to introduce them at the beginning, the middle, or the end of every sentence; and, above all, to become a proficient in that peculiar kind of titter that oversteps the smile, yet merely borders on the laugh, which Hogarth depicted as characteristic of idiocy, excited by conceit, but which is supposed by the object of the preceding sketch to be the peculiar indication of genius, awakened by vivacity.

It is almost superfluous to observe that a cockscomb is naturally attached to a cock. The Richmond Romeo adorns his horses and his vehicle with emblems of watchfulness; his harness is resplendent with cocks, and his mares are supplied with the only articles in which they are deficient! But as it unfortunately happens that to rival him in this mode of notoriety, requires either money or credit, and as it may possibly happen that many aspiring youths are destitute of these necessary preliminaries, the same object may be attained by assuming the character of a gingerbread Romeo, and shewing off to any polite audience that the young adventurer may be able to collect in the village barn. In the school of Coates, dignity is denoted by stalking across the stage in strides of two yards each; agony, by a furious stamping at the end of

every second line; ease of manners, by playing with the fringe of Romeo's jacket, and by repeated glances of admiration at his gilt sandals. To commit at least three mistakes in each line of the play, to pronounce PERFECT purfet, BURDEN bardan, and MEMORY me mary, if accompanied with a due protrusion of the eye-balls, and a motion of the arms somewhat similar to that of the toyshop harlequins, is peculiarly characteristic; and the difficulties thrown in the way of such improvements by a decent education, are certainly surmounted by adequate perseverance.

Should the juvenile reader of these instructions be fortunately possessed of the pecuniary requisites, he will find that to sport his cocks is a fruitful source of the most delectable fun, and the most exquisite delight. To put all his female relatives to the blush by inuendoes and double entendres on the decorations of his tits, must be highly gratifying; girls look so funny when they are ashamed, and mock modesty is so ridiculous a thing! The only danger is that of having it supposed that pretension is meant to supply the place of possession, and that his horses are adorned by art, with attributes that nature has denied to himself.

The third of these illustrious characters, we shall distinguish by the name of Montague. Descended from an illustrious line of ancestors, his whole object is to be distinguished as a whip, and his acquisitions are confined to the knowledge of buckish and sporting slang. At the university he is famed for his proficiency in the manners and conversation of the true bred Varments, for the neatness of his tits, for the dexterity with which he supplies the place of the driver of the Telegraph, for his exploits among the pieces, and the force of his antipathy to every kind of learning but that which relates to the stable or the brothel. Instead of attending lectures, he passes his mornings at Newmarket, his vacations are devoted to Jackson, and the only arithmetic that he condescends to study, is the doctrine of chances. When he honors the circles of London with his presence, he as-

21

sumes the manners, and employs the language of a jockey; pays his morning visits in a wig and upper Benjamin, amuses the tea table with betting five to two on Highflyer against Pegasus, entertains his mistress with a dissertation on grease and spavin, and frightens all his acquaintances with displaying his proficiency in the sublime art of mil-When he wishes to shew off to more than usual advantage, he talks for a quarter of an hour, in phraseology not very different from that of the following harangue: "So you see we rose at six, and so what does I and Buxton do but off we sets in our curricles, with the tits in high style. And so cries I as I goes off, ye! hip, my boys; and away we drives at a hell of a rate, for Buxton you must know is a damn'd good fellow, and a devil of a whip. So on we pushed to Mother Red-cap's, when who should I see but old Peg Hopkins, an old piece of mine, who used to live in Suffolk-street; I could'nt do less you know than ask her to take a drop of the right sort, and so we hauled her into the band-box, and then, says I, keep it up, my girl! what d'ye say to a trip to the Horns at Highgate? So just as we got there we saw one of the comicalest things! I declare I did so laugh, it looked so funny for all the world, seeing as how a parson's bare head, his wig being blown away, looks so quizzical. Well what does I do, but I jerks up his old frizzy with my whip, and lord! it would have done your heart good to have seen how old blackcoat run after us-just like a rat after a tandem! when, as the devil would have it, the off mare began to kick, so I was forced to jump out, and the poor jade was in a sad condition sure enough! it drew tears into my eyes to see it: she was all scraped and scarified about her knees, so what does I do, but sends for some oil of vitriol, and my eye! how she did scamp when she felt it burning her; she was as neat a goer as ever jogged it along the road, and seeing as how it could'nt be helped, I sent up for Billy to come down and take care of her. As for the old bore of a blackcoat, why I did so lay my whip over him, and the old fellow roar'd, it would have done your heart good to hear him; so thinks I this is a damn'd bad job, moreover having

to dine with Byron at five, and talk about pieces and tits, and ourselves and so forth; so what does I do but I hires a horse at the inn, though I always was mortal unwilling to have hack horses, and inn-keepers being imposing, but considering, as one may say, that it couldn't be help'd. for every body knows that misfortunes happen to the best of us, why I drove away in high style, Buxton going tother way. But the best of it has to come, for just as I was coming up John-street who should I see but old dad pushing along with a damn'd fine girl; Ah! thinks I, I'll be up with you, old boy; so I put Pegon one of my upper Benjamins, and Thomas's tily shallow, and so says I when the old don drove up, Now this an't a girl, father, that's flat; you can't think I would dress any body in men's clothes; I'll be damn'd if it ben't a gentleman and not a girl! But damn me if the old boy didn't suspect me, for all I told him so, and what does he do but snatches at the lily shallow, and there what should he see but Peg's cap. But now comes the story; You'll split your sides with laughing, when I tell you! As soon as ever Peg found that she was found out, she pulls hold of my old dad's girl, and says "Oh! oh! Miss Impudence; so indeed you could get hold of nothing to flaunt about in with your old lovey, but my new pelisse indeed! a pretty story truly, that I'm to find a madam like you in gowns and clean things indeed. The world has come to a fine pass truly! Here's a go for once of a time. I'll scratch your eyes out Miss Minx, 'at will I! Take that, miss!" Well egad old daddy looked as glum as if he'd been going to kick the bucket; so he takes out a five pound note and gives to her to be off; and away we drives to Oxendonstreet, thinking how hellish fine old Rusty had been taken in."

Such, with a due admixture of slang phrases, which in compassion to your readers I have omitted, is the characteristic phraseology of this hopeful young man. If your aspiring readers be anxious to obtain an acquaintance with the slang vocabulary, I shall refer them to Captain Grose's Dictionary.

But I have already trespassed beyond all reasonable limit, and must postpone my devoirs to several other notorious characters to a subsequent number.

Yours, truly, PERTINAX.

MRS. SUMBEL-LATE MRS. WELLS.

The public curiosity has been so much excited, by the publication of the memoirs of this celebrated actress, that we have thought it due to our readers to sacrifice our own prejudices to their gratification; and to communicate the following particulars of a female whose distresses we would rather have relieved in any other mode than the narration of her history.

THE grandfather of Mrs. Wells was a poor Welsh curate, a writer contemporary with Pope, and kept an academy in Soho-square: he had a large family, and being very fond of pouring forth libations to Bacchus, expired while offering up his orisons to the purple-nosed deity. His eighth son, Mr. Thomas Davies, the father of Mrs. Wells, was a carver and gilder of Birmingham, and conducted his business in conjunction with one Griffin, of Warwick, who lent him a sum of money, and on being disappointed in his expectation of repayment, proceeded to execution. The distress of her father deprived him of reason, and he died in a receptacle for lunatics, and Mrs. Davies, after rejecting the infamous proposals of her husband's partner, who appears to have levied an execution on the goods as the first step towards a more valuable possession, obtained a temporary asylum with a quaker friend: one of her two daughters was committed to the protection of her benevolent schoolfellow, Mrs. Morgan, while Mrs. Wells herself accompanied a female servant to the house of Mrs. Alfry, whose kindness she takes every occasion to commemorate.

To Mr. Yates, the proprietor and manager of the Birmingham theatre, she was indebted for her first theatrical attempt: he prevailed on her mother to permit the servant to take her sister and herself to the play. The farce was the Padlock, and Mrs. Wrighten, of Drury-lane Theatre, played Leonora. Rebecca was delighted, and the next morning (though not six years old,) annoyed the whole house with chaunting "little foolish, flutt'ring thing." Mr. Yates, at that time on a visit to her father, exclaimed on hearing her, "I have listened to the child, and have no hesitation in saying that nature has stamped her an actress."

After the dispersion of the family, Mr. Yates conceiving from her elegant accomplishments and beautiful person, that the mother of Mrs. Wells might become an acquisition to the stage, prevailed on her, by the offer of a benefit, to attempt at Birmingham the part of Indiana in the Conscious Lovers. "A heart overflowing with gratitude to her friends," deprived her of the power of utterance, and she retired amidst the plaudits of a sympathising audience. On the following morning Mr. Yates informed her that he did not think she would ever be fit for a theatre, and enquired after the little girl, whom some years before he had heard singing, " little foolish, flutt'ring thing." The expression he had formerly made use of on that occasion occurred to her remembrance; she informed him of the place of her daughter's retreat, and Mr. Wild, a clergyman of Bristol, was requested to call on her protectress, apprize her of her future destination, and send her down to Birmingham. The old lady with that " prejudice" (as it is called by Mrs. Sumbell) so common in the world against going on the stage, exclaimed that it was sending her to destruction; and producing her will, in which the future Cowslip had been favour. ably mentioned, drew her pen across her name.

Her first essay at the Birmingham theatre was in the

character of the Duke of York, in Richard the Third, which part was that night filled by Mr. Farren. Her second and third attempts were as Cupid in the Trip to Scotland, and Prince Arthur in King John. At that time the countess of Derby was an ornament to the rival company, and played Indiana at Younger's theatre, while Mrs. Wells was too

young to appear before the public in petticoats.

That her first female part was Sukey Chitterling in Harlequin's Invasion, that she learned dancing from Miss West, afterwards Mrs. Suet, who taught her gratuitously. that she and her brother both received engagements in the strolling company of a Mr. Butler, who travelled to Harrowgate, Rippon, Pontefract; and that on her removal to Cheltenham she played Juliet in that very barn in which Mrs. Siddons (of her aspersions upon whom we shall enter into an investigation at the conclusion of our narrative) performed in her youthful days, "after leaving her place as lady's maid to Mrs. (afterwards lady) Greathead of Warwick," are anecdotes of which we leave the dates and the minutiæ to those most trifling of all triflers, the theatrical gossips.

In the season immediately following she obtained an engagement at Glocester, where she played Juliet the second time. Her Romeo was a Mr. Wells; they fell in love with each other, and rose from the tomb of the Capulets happy in the idea of having inspired a mutual attachment. In a few months the nuptial knot was tied at Shrewsbury. Her matrimonial felicity was but of short duration, for shortly after the arrival of her mother, her sister, and herself at Exeter, Mr. Wells "sent her to her mamma"

with the following laconic and feeling epistle:

[&]quot; As your daughter is too young and childish, I beg you will for the present take her again under your protection : and be assured I shall return to her soon, as I am now going a short journey. I remain, " Your's, &c."

In consequence of her husband's disappearance she took

a trip to London, and under the auspices of Mr. Colman. performed the part of Madge, in Love in a Village. Her success in this character and that of Mrs. Cadwallader in the Author, obtained her a regular engagement; and her excellence in Cowslip in the Agreeable Surprize, a part written expressly for her by Mr. O'Keefe, as well as the public approbation of her Macheath, rendered her exertions at Mr. Colman's theatre extremely productive. Her inexperience however involved her in embarrassment, for after entering into articles for four years, and fulfilling her engagement, she obtained no other pecunia-

ry recompence than the receipts of her benefit.

Whileshe continued to perform a great variety of characters from Cowslip to Jane Shore, she was obliged to study in private to fill up the chasm of a defective education. Before the close of the season her benefit was announced; and Mr. Topham, an officer in the Life Guards presented her with an epilogue." I ever admired, (she says) great abilities and learning; as I knew by my own feelings the want of them, regarding as a superior order of being, that person who possessed those elegant accomplishments in which I was so deficient. The different necessary interviews we had from my frequently rehearing the epilogue before him, created a mutual esteem between I was captivated with the beauty of his mind: he made me an offer of his hand; but as we could not be legally united in this kingdom, he proposed going to Italy. I listened to his offer, and as at the time I believed him to be sincere, his being so much older than myself, induced me to think he would continue his regard to the end of our lives. I accepted it. But fortunately for him the commotions on the continent, an occurrence I did not advert to when I made the promise, prevented our immediate departure, which from constant procrastination was at length obliterated from the tablet of memory. Under the impression of his honorable intentions towards me, when circumstances should enable him to perform his engagement, I removed to his house unknown to my

mother." They resided in Bryanstone-street for three years, when she became the mother of two children; and at the expiration of that period they removed to Beaufort-buildings, where Topham established a paper called The World; in which the Della Cruscan school of poetry first committed its effusions to the public.

In consequence of some unguarded expressions let fall respecting her, a duel was fought between two gentlemen of sporting notoriety, in which Mr. Reynolds the dramatist was one of the seconds. On receiving this information, her alarm was so excessive that she was delivered of her fourth child two months before her time. Confined to her room extremely ill, she one day heard a conversation between one of the servants and the housekeeper. The latter was extremely deaf, and appeared to conceive that the person to whom she addressed herself laboured under the same imperfection. They were conversing respecting a lady whom Mrs. Wells had always received as a bosom friend, and on whom she had conferred the most weighty obligations; and the house-keeper ended the dialogue by exclaiming " wretch !---with child by T." The fatal words reached her ear, and her feelings sustained such a shock that in the heighth of her anguish she communicated her discovery to her protector.

Having involved herself in embarrassments by acts of kindness to her brother-in-law Mr. Samuel, of which the detail would be totally uninteresting to the public, she was arrested for the first time, and escorted to a lock-up house, whence she sent for Mr. Reynolds, and requested him to go to the office of the World newspaper, the property of Mr. Topham, who happened to be out of town, and procure the money; the payment of which she asserts to have been the only pecuniary obligation to her protector, under which she ever permitted herself to labour, and even this sum is proved by Topham's letters to have been repaid by instalments. Immediately on her liberation she set out for France. The morning after her arrival at Calais she went to the convent of the or-

der of the Benedictines, and agreed with the lady abbess, to become an inmate: paid the necessary advance, sent in her trunks, and agreed to commence next morning. In the mean time an order came from the National Assembly to destroy the building and turn its inhabitants loose upon the world! With great difficulty she got back her trunks; and was obliged to submit to the loss of the money she had paid, extremely happy in having escaped so well, and having eluded a visit from the Sans Culottes. At Calais she remained about two months, when the joyful tidings arrived, that her affairs in England were "patched up" for the present, and that she might return in safety. She performed at Covent-garden, till the beginning of April, when her creditors again began to be troublesome, and accompanied by a female friend she was a second time hurried to France, whence she was obliged to fly almost as soon as she arrived, to escape the cruelties of Robespierre.

On her arrival in London she sent to Mr. Topham to inform him she was come, when he requested Mr. Reynolds to leave her at an hotel for the night. At their interview the next morning, the alarm of creditors was again thundered in her ears, and she was persuaded by the captain to leave London under the impression of personal dauger, little suspecting that Topham had just taken Mrs. Lambert under his protection, and wished to conceal the circumstance from the mother of his children.

The circumstances attending her departure, are enveloped in considerable mystery. She asserts that in order to diminish her credit with her friends, and prevent them from believing her assertions respecting the conduct of Mr. Topham, that gentleman gave out that she was mad, and artfully engaged her lodgings at a farm-house in the neighbourhood of Dr. Willis, in order to sanction the report. Before we give full credit however to so atrocious a charge, it is but due to Mr. Topham to observe, that she acknowledges his having advised her to "go to Gretford near Stamford in Lincolnshire, to be near Dr. Willis."

Now for what ostensible purpose did he wish her to be near Dr. Willis? his skill in the care and cure of insanity was sufficiently known; by complying with the captain's suggestion, she appears to acknowledge its propriety. It is true, indeed, that during her residence near the doctor, she is favoured with long letters from Mr. Reynolds the dramatist; yet it is possible for a woman to be occasionally dangerous, who is not insensible to the passing scenes of life, or incapable of epistolary intercourse. It appears to us that Mrs. Wells was subject to occasional and temporary delirium; which though not so frequent or so continued as to debar her from the moderate enjoyment of society, was a source of professional inconvenience. and of prospective uneasiness; and that with the advice of her friends, she selected a retreat, that while it secluded her from the vigilance of the minious of the law. enabled her to have recourse to those medical attentions that might soonest contribute to mental convalescence.

A confinement of four months in the King's Bench, a trip to Ireland, a short residence with her children at the deserted seat of Major Topham, Thaydon lodge; her removal to Osborne's Hotel, in search of her sister who had returned from India, but without riches, and her removal from thence to the place of her former durance, occupied the next three years of her life. On her second visit to the Bench, she contracted an acquaintance with the Hon. Captain Blackwood. His attentions during his confinement were unremitted; but the day at length arrived when he was to bid the prison farewell. On the morning of his departure he informed her that he had purchased her the rules, and begged that she would walk out with him, but "conceive (she exclaims) my astonishment on being told that I was free. The sum for which I had been detained was fifteen hundred pounds, which was paid without a murmur by that generous Hibernian." It is almost needless to add that she was not ungrateful.

But her freedom was not of long duration. She had become security for her brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel,

whom she describes as "rolling in splendor at the west end of the town, while she is indebted to the Theatrical Fund for her humble subsistence." On his account, therefore, she was arrested and moved by habeas corpus into the Fleet, the scene of her second marriage. Mr. Sumbel was born in the capital of the dominions of the emperor of Morocco, to whom his father had been prime minister upwards of thirty years: from thence he was sent to France, to receive his education. The numerous remittances sent him by his father being discovered by the emperor, the old man was thrown into prison, from whence he contrived to make his escape to Gibraltar. to which garrison he had sent considerable supplies from Mogadore, when it was defended by Elliot. The old man was at length poisoned by the intrigues of his sovereign; and Mr. Sumbel being a Jew, his two brothers went over to France to him to claim their share of their paternal inheritance, which they were entitled to do by the Mosaic law; to avoid a settlement he fled to Holland. and from thence came over to England, whither one of the brothers followed him. On his arrival in this country, he waited on Lord William Bentinck, with whom he had been acquainted on the continent, and was by his lordship introduced to the Duke of Portland. To avoid his brother, Sumbel retired to the woods near Willsdon Green, where he concealed himself by day, and reposed by night beneath the covert of the hedges. He concealed India bonds in the hollow of an old tree, which he was never after able to find out. The oddity of his appearance and the quantity of diamonds he had about him, which he often shewed to the peasants to induce them to let him sleep in their cottages, at last excited a suspicion in their minds, that he must be the man who had robbed the Turkish ambassador. They accordingly determined to seize him, and give information of him at the Duke of Portland's office. With the assistance of a constable, they accomplished their purpose, and tied him to a post in a stable. In this situation, he remained till the

duke sent Mr. Walsh to him with a chaise and four. On his being conducted to town the duke was unable to extract a single word from him; to all the questions that were put, he gave written answers, and for some private reason, he persisted in a silence of three months.

The circumstance of his being at the Duke's office, reached the ears of the person who had the chancellor's writ against him, at the suit of his brother; he set off instantly, arrested him as he was coming out, and conveyed him to a lock-up house. He continued there about six weeks, nor could they by any means prevail on him to speak a single word. The hearing before the chancellor at length took place, and the only answer he made to the many questions put to him by his lordship was, "my lord, I wish you would send me to the Fleet, for (pointing to the keeper of the lock-up-house) that is one damned rascal."

His lordship used every argument in his power to make him come to a settlement with his brothers, but finding he was determined to the contrary committed him to the Fleet.

He entered the prison in all the pomp and splendour of an eastern monarch, attended by a number of Moorish servants. A report had circulated among the prisoners, that some foreign ambassador had been committed for contempt of court, and excited to the highest pitch the spirit of temale curiosity.

A lady in the prison, who had seen Mrs. Wells play Roxalana, said in a jesting manner, "let us have a peep at the Sultan." They went into the gallery, had a slight glance at him, and returned to their rooms, conceiving that their frolic would end there; but on the Saturday he sent her an invitation to dine with him, along with any female companions she thought proper. Having therefore put on the best bib-and-tucker her wardrobe could afford, accompanied by two ladies, she repaired to dinner. On entering the room, which was fancifully hung with pink satin, they found there several of the Turkish ambassador's suite, and many of their friends. One old man

named Abbo, took a fancy to her, and made her formal proposals of marriage, and being rejected, returned in a few days afterwards, to the prison, for the purpose of assassinating her and her new admirer; but timely notice enabled them to frustrate his intentions.

A short time previous to this circumstance, a gentleman offered to liberate her from confinement. This offer coming to the ears of Mr. Sumbel, the fear of losing her operated so strongly on his mind, that he made her proposals of marriage, which it is almost needless to add, were accepted. An insolvent act taking place shortly after, she obtained her liberty in one way, though she had just given her consent to lose it in another.

An obstacle, however, still stood between them, which it was necessary to overcome, before they could be legally united. Her former husband, Mr. Wells, she had reason to suppose was still living, although she had neither seen nor heard from him for upwards of twenty years. Every advice was taken; and it was at last decided that she must turn Jewess, and they were married according to the rites of the Jewish church. Mr. Sumbel determined that notwithstanding the ceremony was to be performed in a prison, it should be conducted with all the profusion of eastern magnificence: it took place in the week of the great feast of the tabernacle of the Jews, and only ended with its conclusion. The genteel prisoners were invited to partake of the fare, and the poor were not forgotten. Four rooms were lighted upon the occasion, and a large lustre was placed in the middle of the long gallery, which cost twenty-five pounds. The sum total of the extraordinaries for that week alone, amounted to five hundred pounds. About a fortnight after their marriage, she prevailed on Mr. Sumbel to compromise with his brother; he gave him twenty thousand pounds, obtained his liberty, and took a house in Orchard-street, Portmansquare, to be near the Turkish ambassador, with whom he was intimate, and whom he often visited.

Mr. Sumbel was haughty, jealous, and irascible; when

where but upon the stage, under the penalty of a "knockdown blow." The diamonds of value that she wore on state days and bonfire nights, on her return home were taken from her, (not in a manner the most delicate,) and committed to the iron chest; and she was never suffered to have a shilling in her pocket, lest she should run away. On their return from a party one evening, he as usual demanded the jewel, all of which she delivered up but her ear-rings, which she was preparing to take out. Conceiving that she did not obey his Moorish commands with sufficient promptitude, he seized hold of one of them and tore it entirely through her ear.

At length the happy couple set out on a visit to Mrs. Sumbel's children. Of the various caprices that seized him on their route; or of the unexampled brutality with which he treated her at every inn to which they were conducted, the detail would be more disgusting than entertaining. Exhausted by impatience to visit her children, and trembling beneath the effects of his jealous rage, she obtained, in the presence of her husband, credit for a chaise to Stilton. He promised faithfully to send her a remittance to defray the necessary expences of her journey; but he did not perform his promise: and the wife of a Moorish nobleman, with half a million at command, was partly indebted to the humanity of her fellow passengers, and partly to the benevolence of an apothecary, for the means of travelling; at length she saw her children, but was too proud to acknowledge her necessities, and actually took her two daughters to accompany her back from the Wolds in search of her husband's letter, without a farthing of money in her pocket; and she and her young companions were indebted for their relief from starvation, to the benevolence of an apothecary.

After many quarrels and reconciliations, he invited her on board a vessel, bound to Mogadore, to partake of an entertainment. She suspected that he was about to sail away with her, and in conjunction with the wife of the

captain effected her escape. He pursued her to her home and attempted to shoot her; the servants rushed into her room, but on her assuring them that the report of the pistol was merely accidental, retired.—Mrs. Sumbel returned to her room, which her husband locked after her, and took away the key. Finding herself alone, she called through the key-hole to one of her Moorish servants, begged him, if possible, to steal the key from his master and let her out. He complied at the hazard of his life: she effected her escape, and took refuge in the neighbour-hood of Grosvenor-square.

He was taken to Bow-street, and bound over to keep the peace; in revenge he refused to pay the debts contracted by his wife, and on an action being determined against him, he went to Prescott's, his banker in the city, and drew out all his money, to prevent an attachment being issued against it, and lodged it with Hammersley in Pall Mall. He then waited on the Duke of Portland, told him that he had been reconciled to his wife, and informed him that business of the utmost consequence called him to Denmark; and as a vessel would sail for that kingdom that night, and the Alien Office was closed for the day, he begged that his grace would grant him a passport. The duke believing what he said complied with his request, and he immediately set sail from England.

He went to Altona in Denmark, where he built a large street at his own expence. For the last few years of his life his sole amusement was fishing. He had a very long room built for the purpose, in which was a large reservoir of water, that contained fish of different descriptions; and he would sit whole days angling in it. If the fish did not bite quick enough to suit his Moorish temper, the water was let off, they were beaten to pieces with a large stick, and the domestics were doomed to sustain the most weighty proofs of his rage and disappointment.

During their country excursion the distress of Mrs. Sumbel was witnessed by Miss Ray, the daughter of a

clergyman. " I wish I had her in my own country," exclaimed the Moor. "I did not know that gentlemen of your persuasion had any country," replied Miss Ray. He never forgot the expression, and resolved to obtain revenge. He therefore visited her father : gave out that he had obtained a divorce from Mrs. Wells, in consequence of her having eaten forbidden meats, and made to her proposals of marriage. The sight of his diamonds made her conceive a more favorable opinion of the man of no country; he obtained her father's consent; prevailed on them both to go to London, took them to a house in Newmanstreet; and sent in plate and china and every other requisite, as well as clothes to a very large amount. On rising early, after returning with her to London, Mr. Sumbel requested his wife to accompany him to breakfast to a lady an acquaintance of theirs, whom she would be very much surprised to see. The carriage being ordered, they drove to Newman-street. On entering the room, she was not a little surprized to see the side-board adorned with some of the plate which she kept solely for religious purposes. As she was endeavouring to account for the circumstance, the door opened and Miss Ray was announced. Their embarrassment was mutual, but Mrs. Sumbel was very soon relieved by seeing Mr.S. go over to her and with all his Moorish impetuosity exclaim, " My God, madam! you are not glad to see my wife !" " Your wife," cried Miss Ray with emotion," I thoughtyou had been divorced from her." Her agitation at the moment was beyond description, and Mr. Sumbel looking at his wife with a sarcastic smile, appeared to exult in the wounded feelings of the unfortunate lady.

To complete the denouement of the piece, her aged father came into the room, with locks as white as snow, and his aged back receiving from time that curve which human art cannot prevent. "Give me leave (said the Moor) to introduce Mrs. Sumbel to you, Sir." The old gentleman fetched a deep groan, seated himself by the fire, rubbed his knees, and exclaimed, "Oh! child, how came you to deceive your poor old father!"

Breakfast was at length brought in; Mr. Sumbel in a tone of irony, pressed Miss Ray to eat some toast; and on her declining exclaimed," Miss Ray, as you have a country to go to, I recommend your setting off for it as soon as possible." Shocked beyond recovery by a mode of revenge so cruel and extraordinary, the lady returned to Northamptonshire, and died in a state of insanity.

To what places she fled from the fear of arrest, or from motives of economy; what insults she was destined to receive; and by what resources she was enabled to exist. till the receipt of a benefit at the Hay-market, and of some assistance from the Theatrical Fund, our readers will not expect us to enumerate. The most memorable occurrences of her later years are; her residence in the neighbourhood of her children in meanness and distress. while they were enjoying all the luxuries of life; her journey to Holy-rood House, and her travels on foot from Edinburgh to Newcastle; her being received with the most profound respect on one of her excursions to town, in consequence of a report that she had attracted the notice of a great personage at Kew, a report that she declares to have been entirely groundless; and her interview with Major Topham, of which her relation is too curious not to demand insertion.

"At his entrance he seemed somewhat startled at my presence; but with that easy polish so natural to him, he soon got the better of it, and thanked me for my attention in sending the letters: he likewise repeated his assurance of doing something for me. I then requested him to pay for the suit of mourning which I wore, as it was for my daughter, and as his own draper, Mr. Rodwell, had in the kindest manner let me have it, certain that he would not object to pay the expence on such an occasion. He put on a face and nodded, just like Lord Burleigh in the Critic, but said nothing: I conceived it a nod of assent, therefore it cannot be said that he broke his word if he has not paid for them. I next told him I was very short of money, and requested he would do me

the favor to pay for my coach, as my illness had deprived me of the little I had. He put his hand into his pocket, with some exertion extracted a dollar from it, which like Hotspur's top, he held "twixt his finger and his thumb," and handed it to me with a smile of satisfaction on his countenance, at the idea of making such a sacrifice for me! My heart filled at the sight; my hand in an involuntary manner advanced to receive it, which it did without being conscious of the action. I left the house, determined to keep it as a sacred relic; and had engraved upon it,—This was given me by the man to whom I bore four children."

We have purposely abstained in the preceding abstract from any of those moral or critical reflections which a perusal of her memoirs is so well calculated to excite. In our next number we shall endeavour to sketch a faithful delineation of her character, and to investigate the truth of those anecdotes and the justice of those aspersions on the characters of her contemporaries, in which she has so frequently and so gratuitously indulged: and we hope that the observations that we shall adduce may have some tendency to repress that popular credulity which mistakes the raving of disappointment, for the vehemence of virtuous satire, or legitimate resentment!

POLITICAL OBSERVER. No. VII.

1. Affairs of Spain.—After the confident predictions of the ministerial newspapers that the next dispatches from the Peninsula would enable them to congratulate their countrymen on the defeat and surrender of Marmont, the public feeling has, by a very natural revulsion, sunk into despondency. No mode of testifying our patriotism can be more injudicious than to indulge in the ardour of anticipated triumph, while there is a possibility of disappointment. The raptures of premature congratulation, by which the editor of the Courier endeavoured to evince his

loyalty, and to excite the enthusiasm of his readers, are remembered by himself with shame, and his readers with disappointment. Anticipation robs success of its power to delight, and aggravates the gloom of misfortune. The multitude who have been at first deceived, regard every future assurance of ultimate victory with natural distrust, and consider even the protraction of a campaign, of which they had been promised the immediate and glorious termination, as a sufficient ground of prospective sorrow.*

The retreat of Lord Wellington, however, by no means justifies the slightest abandonment of those hopes which every rational observer of passing events was disposed to entertain. The great object of our commander is not to gain a victory, of which the glory would be the only reward, but the preservation of Portugal and the gradual deliverance of Spain from the power of the enemy. accomplish this object it is not necessary that in a sanguinary conflict 10,000 Frenchmen and 5000 Englishmen should be left on the field of battle. To harass the enemy in his marches and counter-marches, to obstruct his supplies, and to rouse to his destruction the hostile peasantry of the country through which the operations of war may compel him to pass, are means of effecting the deliverance of Spain, not less sure than a brilliant and decisive action. The most sanguinary admirer of English bravery cannot but suppose that the resistance of the enemy, even supposing the numbers of the respective armies to be equal, would be desperate and bloody; and we might beat Marmont by disabling ourselves from any power to interrupt his future operations. Besides, it is only by the cautious system of warfare that we are anxious to recommend, that our Spanish allies will most effectually assist us, and enure themselves to habits of dependence on themselves, of unallied exertion, and national bra-

^{*} We assert from the best authority, that on the 9th of this month the sick in the rear of our army amounted to 24,000.

very: and that by desultory warfare they should learn to regard themselves with respect, and the enemy without terror. All that a great and generous nation could do in the support of freedom, and the protection of an injured people, we have willingly and liberally performed. By demanding of the Cortes that their armies should be disciplined, and their officers commanded by British generals, we have done that which, if our humble suggestions had been attended to, would have been accomplished long before the battle of Albuera; and it yet remains to be determined, whether by this prompt and decisive interference, we have not given a new and powerful stimulus to that spirit of patriotism which has hitherto so successfully defied the iron hand and torturing power of relentless tyranny and insatiable ambition.

2. America.—It is not easy to discover the course which the American government is likely to pursue with respect to this country: their papers are full of preparation, mounting guns, mustering militia, building privateers, and sweeping the tyrants of the ocean from the Atlantic. But we know the nature of American policy too well to be much alarmed even by these alarming symptoms of hostility. The Dutchman of the New World differs in nothing from his brother of the old, but in manners unsoftened even by a consideration of his interest, and an avidity for gain so rapacious as to disappoint itself. Virtuous, as far as sluggish feelings and calculating habits would allow him to be, the Dutchman, no man's friend, and no man's enemy, toiled on to add guilder to guilder, and to die rich, or sit for the last half dozen years of his life in an arbour painted blue or green, by the side of a stagnant canal. The American, with the disadvantage of his savage neighbourhood, added to the rude, griping, and ferocious habits of new society struggling to maturity in a barbarous land, naturally passed beyond his prototype; and the low American of the southern states is at this day the only being whom commerce, the great polisher of nations, has never been able to civilize.

men of the northern states are of a superior order, and occasional anecdotes of pure honour and polished hospitality have been recorded of them. Even among the southern colonies it is not to be doubted that there are striking exceptions to the general character. general character is compounded of nationalities that must make the Americans in war the least deserving of respect, and in peace the least deserving of confidence, among the nations of the world. Arguing then from our knowledge of the people, we are not of opinion that the late outrage committed by Rogers was sanctioned by the government, or that they will have recourse to any act of spirited hostility. Proclamations may be issued, and militia embodied, and the innkeepers made rich, and the populace amused by field-days and reviews, but to go to war is equally above their spirit, and beyond their power. At this moment the colonies are disconnected in interest as much as in situation: a few commercial advantages held out to any one of them, will seduce it from the fede. ral compact, and the union will be dissolved for ever.

Reform and the Constitution .- We have been attacked with considerable vehemence by a contemporary publication, for asserting that the British constitution derives no claims to respect from its antiquity, and that the long duration of any system is but a feeble argument for its perfection or for resistance to the reformation of its errors. Now, though this meaning has been given to our words by a very reprehensible interpolation, yet we have no reluctance to avow and to defend the maxims ascribed to us. It is true, as we have occasion to observe elsewhere, of our constitution as of most others, established in the earlier periods which succeeded to the extinction of the Roman empire, that it has no preponderating claim on account of any peculiar wisdom displayed in its construction. The original form of government in this country, like that in most other of the states of Europe, was established when legislators could neither read nor write: when the works of the elder ancients lay literally buried in the dust; when history, art, and science were

alike unknown or unnoticed. In short, governments in general at this period were formed when legislators had no experience themselves, and could derive no advantage from the knowledge of others; when force stood in the place of right, and the few lorded it over the many. The result, as might have been expected, was, that ignorance. injustice, and intolerance, were universal; and a lapse of ten centuries had witnessed fewer improvements than have received birth during ten years of modern times, in consequence of our partial deviation from that very system of antiquity which the opposers of reform so enthusiastically admire, and so religiously adore. Notwithstanding the bigoted wish of the barons of England, (Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari) scarcely a shred of Magna Charta is at present looked to in practice; villainage is extinct: most of the feudal rights of the crown and aristocracy are commuted; pecuniary compensation for fine exists only in a very trifling degree, and many oppressions resulting from the practice of the feudal ages, have been concealed or abolished. If much therefore has already been the object of reform, why ought we refrain from witnessing its benefits to the utmost possible extent? All governments are liable in many respects to be changed involuntarily. This may arise not only from internal corruption, but also from alterations which may take place in the circumstances of the subject; in cases, for instance, where a degraded class of men, are restored to particular rights; where religious disabilities affecting a considerable part of the nation are removed; or where rights having been accidentally made local, the scene of population has afterwards shifted itself. In these and similar instances, it would be absurd to say that we have not a right to accommodate our government to the actual position of the day, because our ancestors had the supposed merit of adapting their constitution to the times in which they lived. Since political wisdom therefore must of necessity be relative, why should knowledge and experience, which are found so useful in other affairs, lose all their valuable properties, when applied to the improvement of

the constitution? By what curious felicity is it, that the framers of our constitution can have selected not only the forms but even the details, not only the best possible for their own times, but for every other? Instead of selection, indeed, it is too well known that accident has been the parent of most institutions. The right of making some and even material alterations is incontrovertibly proved by the history of this country; and whatever may be said of its ancient constitution, and the justice of its government in former periods, it will be found that it did not arrive at its present state of perfection till after the revolution, which was not obtained before two kings had been dethroned, one of whom was beheaded; and judge Blackstone asserts, "that if a revolution should return in the country, with the precise circumstances attending that in question, such a revolution would be warranted even by law." How much more than a century is it since a revolution was made in the government of Scotland by its union with England; and how recently has Ireland undergone a similar change? The principal objections to any alteration of the constitution, are usually drawn from the evils which are to be expected from the practical establishment of such alterations; but to what are these evils generally owing? Surely they are not to be imputed wholly to the public: when it makes a moderate and reasonable demand, either for the establishment of an acknowledged right, or the correction of an obvious abuse, something may fairly be attributed to those who refuse the concession.

Another argument is employed against opening the door to any alteration at all, from a fear, that if those who have the power, recede but one step, it will afford their adversaries an opportunity of pushing them much further on the road to reform than they are willing or ought to go. Whatever practical truth there may be in this argument, and we do not assign it much, there is something in it very illogical. Would it be a sufficient reason for refusing the payment of a just debt, that a debt which is not due might be afterwards demanded? Can an actual

injustice on our part be defended by pleading a possible injustice on the part of others? We would ask the prudent and thinking part of the nation, whether the best hope we can entertain of saving the best parts of our constitution, be not fairly to sacrifice some of those useless powers, and to surrender some of those abuses, which have imperceptibly crept into the practice of our government: and will it not be prudent to do this while a spirit of liberality exists, which is not unfriendly to a fair commutation for the sacrifice? Though everything ought to be denied to popular clamour, something should be conceded to public opinion. A wise statesman will leave nothing to chance or possibility; and will know how to anticipate the concession of that which cannot long be retained; foolish are those who place their own safety and the tranquillity of their country, on the mere temporary posture of events. Prudence requires that such a stability should be aimed at in public affairs, as even adverse circumstances shall not affect or injure. Let the uneasiness which has obtained possession of the public mind, in consequence of the present disappointment of its hopes; and let that discontent which is naturally excited by the pressure of taxes, be only a little increased by an unproductive harvest, and it will be ascertained, whether the minds of men in this country have not abandoned many prejudices with regard to the constitution, lost much of their respect for its institutions, and made a progress in the science of legislation, which may call for strong grounds of satisfaction before our affairs will return to their accustomed calmness.

THE SPORTSMAN, AND THE ABBESS.

SIR,

In detailing the history, and delineating the characters of celebrated men, their ancestry is the first, if not the

most important object of biographical enquiry. It is possible, indeed, that more than one of the personages whose exploits are recorded in your publication, may be at a loss to ascertain with any degree of self-satisfaction. to whom the debt of filial affection justly belongs; and it cannot be expected that a periodical satirist should investigate the mysteries of bastardy, or narrate the memoirs of the fifteen or twenty reputed fathers, to whom a G--- or a V--- are supposed to have been indebted for existence. The public, however, has a right to demand that your want of information respecting the father of your heroes, should occasionally be supplied by the history of their mothers and their mother's husbands; and as your late memoirs of a friend of Mr. T. is extremely defective in this particular, the following narrative may perhaps be acceptable to you, and interesting to your readers.

If we may rely on the assertions of the lady herself respecting the early period of her life, she was seduced at the age of fifteen by General Amherst, the hero of Quebec: she admitted that he had just reason to accuse her of infidelity, and that on his last return from America, he found it advisable to dismiss her with a present Unlike many of the frail sisterhood, she retained the most prudential habits of economy amidst all the profligacy of her profession; and submitted to promiscuous prostitution rather to augment her pecuniary store than to contribute to extravagance of dress, or to bacchanalian excesses. She could drink, indeed, but it was always at the expence of others; and when deserted or neglected by her votaries, she contented herself with the necessities of life. Keeping one great object constantly in view, she converted the adventurers who addressed her with designs on her purse, into instruments of depredation; and as the science of fictitious bills was not at that period so perfectly understood as by the present enlightened generation, orders for prize money, and post obit bonds, were the rewards of her ingenuity, and the furniture of her cabinet. Having amassed a few

thousand pounds by a long series of roguery and profilgacy, she became the proprietor of a fashionable bagnio in Covent-garden; and by keeping her nunnery well supplied, and performing occasionally the part of a second Phryne, soon eclipsed every competitor in the race of harlotry.

She was now verging fast towards the age of fifty. when she began to turn her thoughts to the blissful state of matrimony. This is a wicked world, and poor helpless woman is always subject to insult and impositions. She was a constant visitor at the Opera, and gave full employment to the Irish chairmen, a race of beings now extinct, who plied about the places of fashionable amusement, and whose brawny persons and lofty stature are supposed to have been contemplated with peculiar admiration by the demireps of that period. They are principal personages in all the secret histories of the time, and are still remembered by many illustrious families. On one of these persons, remarkable above the rest for all the requisites of Irish manhood, the fair prioress cast an eve of more than maternal affection; on more than one occasion she slipped an additional shilling into his hand, and at length having thoroughly consulted her inclinations, invited him to her house. The circumstances of their interviews exalted him in the opinion of the fair experimentalist, and she engaged him as her flash-man. His chairman's dress was thrown aside in favour of more becoming habiliments; and the dancing and fencing masters were engaged to teach him the manners of a gentleman. When he had so far proceeded in the attainment of the requisite accomplishments, that his appearance should reflect no disgrace on the female of whom he was about to become the protector, she gave him her hand, and from that moment he became a man of fortune and a sportsman!

Such, Mr. Editor, is the history of the parents; your supplement to the history of the son, will be the most proper and effective commentary on the facts I have recorded.

7
C. C.

PATRIOTS AND NEWSPAPER REPORTERS.

*SIR,

The pages of the Scourge, as well as the writings of every individual who employs his pen in support of Burdettism, contain so many professions of incorruptible virtue, and such triumphant charges of corruption, virulence, and indecorum, against every member and admirer of the government, that a superficial or credulous observer would naturally suppose the Patriots to be the most worthy and most injured of mankind, equally to be admired for their collective wisdom and their private virtues, and uniting to an exemplary portion of Christian forbearance and humility, the most polished urbanity of manner, and the most inflexible rectitude of principle.

The truth is (and I call upon you to disprove the assertion if you are able,) that notwithstanding all the blustering of their friends, and timidity of their adversaries, the most active members among the Burdettites, and the majority of their literary advocates, are the vilest outcasts of society: profligate in their principles, vulgar in their manners, superficial in their acquirements, and perverse and conceited in their opinions: the constant visitors of the tap-room or the brothel, and the apostate hirelings of any demagogue who has occasion for their services, or any democratic newspaper, with the proprietor of which they can obtain a connection.

That a few of the principals may be men of intellect and honesty, and that a small proportion of the understrappers are worthy of more honorable employments, it would be equally imprudent and uncharitable to affect any disbelief; but that the general character of their lite-

^{*} We insert the letter as containing in a reasonable space the substance of the aspersions of the Antijacobins, from Bowles to J. Gifford, and because it will afford us materials of future observation. Untunately it is by no means original.

rary partizans, is such as I have represented it to be, it will require all the impudence of Lovell to deny, and all the ability of Cobbett to disprove. Such, indeed, is the prevalent opinion of their morals, that there are not above three persons connected with the independent press, who have access to a single private family, or the most distant acquaintance with their more respectable contemporaries. Their convivial enjoyments are confined to the Fousil, or the Cheshire Cheese, as their ideas of domestic bliss and female loveliness, are derived from their occasional visits to the nymphs of Drury-lane.

It cannot be disputed, that among the independent journalists are not only bankrupts and beggars, but rogues and traitors; that one of them has been elevated to the pillory, that many of them have been kicked out of respectable society, and that the majority are remarkable for qualities, directly opposite to those which should distinguish the patriot, the scholar, and the gentleman.

Even of those few who are neither the orators of tap rooms, nor the associates of chairmen, the pursuits are such as would lead their readers to the gallows, or the hulks. One of the most popular evening papers, was a short time ago conducted by a man, who notoriously subsisted, previous to its establishment, on the produce of his dexterity at cards; only two years are elapsed since Jew King had the modesty to assume the character and office of a British Guardian; and a Burdettite paper is expected to appear, of which the religious department is to be conducted by the long-forgotten Editor of the Matrimonial Magazine.

But it may be asserted that to become the editor of a newspaper, or even to perform the duties of a parliamentary reporter, demands extraordinary talents, and that something should be conceded to the eccentricities of genius. This is the defence that however foolish it may appear to a cool enquirer, has been advanced for all the literary profligates who have degraded themselves, and corrupted or annoyed mankind. But in the present case, allowing the conclusion to be legitimate, we must first

be assured that the premises are correct. What authority we have for supposing these men to be superior to their contemporaries, except their own boasts, and the assertions of their retainers, it would not be easy to discover; their original productions display no uncommon vigor of intellect, or profundity of research, and their political tirades are generally forgotten as soon as they are read-To give a correct report of the debates is certainly beyond the power of every literary ignoramus; and the persons engaged in that employment are usually the most flaming of patriots: but whether our common newspaper reports be entitled to the praise of correctness may be justly doubted; and at any rate neither their retention nor arrangement requires any other powers or qualifications than such as commonly distinguish the sensible and well-educated man.

Let us no longer be insulted, Sir, by the clamorous arrogance of men whom accident alone has elevated into comparative importance, and who but for the memorable indiscretion of Mr. Windham, and the quackery of our political dramatist, would have been viewed in their true character of copying clerks, who have no other claim to our kindness or respect than the conscientious performance of their humble drudgery. When they display the talents of their advocate they may be permitted to emulate his vices; but till another Sheridan appear in the ranks of the political retainers of Sir Francis, they must be content to learn that impudence is no protection from disgrace, and that though genius may sometimes emblazon the errors, or palliate the crimes of the wit, the poet, and the statesman; the follies and the weakness of the mere political compiler, serve only to render the mediocrity of his understanding more visible and contemptible.

Such are the feelings and opinions that influenced the determination of our society in the publication of the byelaw, which they were afterwards compelled, however reluctantly, to repeal. To effect the sam jobject, however, some mode of proceeding ought to have been adopted that would have precluded the possibility of un-

welcome intrusion, without injustice to gentlemen of liberal education, polished manners, and exemplary virtue. The late rejection of Mr. Best is a sufficient proof that the society would not be withheld from the exercise of any extemporaneous prerogative by a feeling of personal delicacy towards the obnoxious individual.

Lincoln's Inn.

Justus.

WINDOW PEEPERS AND COUNTRY MAYORS.

While Folly clapp'd her hands, and Wisdom star'd."

Churchill.

WHEN a man either thrusts or wriggles himself into a situation to which neither his hands nor his brains can furnish him with a certificate of qualification, he ought to be cited before the court of common sense for to answer the trespass. Title, rank, situation, or occupation, should not screen the obtrusive blockhead. Time was, when men were fitted to places, and not places to men: it were no easy achievement in days of yore for worm-nibbled, ricketty little masters, to be smuggled into office in the must of their accommodating cousin, or bewitching sister, but tempora mutaniur! Mamma has, perhaps, only one thick-headed lad, and being possessed of more thousands than grains of sense, VAPID, must needs be brought up to the bar; when nature never intended him for any thing higher than the superintendance of a string, to the farther end of which was fastened --- a bear. BENIG-Nus imbued with the milk of human kindness, who would have been an ornament to a pulpit, is, forsooth, bound in red, with steel extra-he fires and ejaculates-charges and moralizes: hence problematic victories, and demonstrative defeats. Flandingo, invigorated by transmigration with the soul of La. X, is doomed (through convenience of a family living, and, as it is always piously understood, by but throughout the whole of the burial service is totally inaudible, saving the solitary sentence in which the tast trump is with such sublimity introduced. Certainly, in his biblical line of march, there are many odd tricks to be picked up, and were they fairly entered as such, we should doubtless be favoured frequently with a dodging octave at least, but in the present state of translation, revision and correction, we must endeavour to be content under buz—buz—buz, to the end of the chapter. Thus is nature thwarted, in her most friendly intentions, and the race of knaves and fools perpetuated ad infinitum.

Taking a circuit some weeks ago in the western counties, my horse happened to cast a shoe immediately on the entrance of a village, and, luckily within a few yards of the shop of the rustic ignipotent. While I was in conversation with Vulcan, I observed, in an inclosure to my right, a large old-fashioned house, in the front of which paraded, with much pomp and seeming assiduity, a dapper consequential gentleman. He had a staff in his hand, seemingly about four feet nine inches in length, and was attended by a youth with a book, in which, at times, he appeared to be making minutes. On my enquiring the name of the architect who was so intently examining the building, the smith, after a loud whistle, replied--architect, Sir--that man in the blue coat there is a window peeper: observing me gaping for elucidation, he rejoined --- the man, Sir, that counts one's windows to see that one does not cheat government. Oh, a surveyor of taxes, I suppose? Why, Sir, if you chuse to have it so, you may -I think that is the way folks direct letters to him. He seems to be upon extraordinary good terms with himself. Yes, yes, so he well may, he is neither more nor less than the mayor of that there market town you have just come through, with the tall spire church. But how comes it to pass, my good friend, that the gentleman, being an officer of the revenue can possibly be a mayor If there should happen, during his mayoralty, to be an election for a member to represent that borough in parliament, how could he be returned if that tax gentleman were chief magistrate, as there is an act of parliament expressly against it? Why, as to that matter, I think I have heard neighbour Axle, who reads the newspaper every week, sav as much as that before; but we do not much mind those things hereabouts; we have rare plenty of parson-justices about us, who are said to be tight hands at easing an act of parliament if it happens to pinch their friends in the fitting. I can tell you two or three nice jokes about Mr. Peeper there since he has been mayor. Soon after he was chosen he made a grand dinner for all the aldermen and his friends the parson-justices --well---just after they had sat down, and Mr. Mayor was clapping his knife aboard the beef, in comes the servant with a letter from MR. SPECTOR, requiring his worship's presence instantly, to a town eight miles off, to look over some sessments: and the poor mayor was obliged to go to horse directly. Another time the fiddlers had just begun to play at a fine ball of his, and then GENERAL SPECTOR calls him off. It seems very odd, Sir, that such a smart town as that should keep a hackney-mare, for the family of the Spectors to trot about through thick and thin at their pleasure. Beside, they say, there is some great board that terrifies him so, he hardly dare say his soul is his own; he hates the very name of board, and turned off his joiner because he would not call every flat piece of wood plank. Several other anecdotes my communicative Cyclop put me in possession of, which, if occasion requires, may, perhaps, at some future time appear.

For several miles of my journey, I could not avoid ruminating on the extreme impropriety, not to use a harsher appellation, of appointing people to fill stations, for which they are either physically or legally ineligible. It appeared to me inexplicable, that one division of the revenue should be conducted upon principles diametrically opposite to the other. The regularity and correctness of the excise system is strikingly pleasing to every methodically organized mind. I consider the outery raised against it, as, in a great measure, wholly unwarrantable.

Every subject of this realm is amenable to the law---the law decrees that such and such imposts shall be levied, that a certain proportion of tax shall issue from a determinate portion of article. The law does not say thereabout; but absolutely so much: and is it not proper that those specific, those actual sums should be collected?

But a man's premises are subjected to the visits and inspection of an excise officer! They are so, and what Does not every man who enters upon a trade of that nature, knowingly enter upon it liable to visitation? Does not every man of that description know that not a farthing can be extracted from his property more than is lawfully demandable? Does not every such man know that the severest punishment hangs in terrorem over the head of that officer, who shall have sufficient temerity to attempt a violation of his duty? In the circle of my acquaintance, I could name many tradesmen who feel not the least unpleasantness at the approach of an excise officer; but I am proud to say those men are neither sham-loyalists nor sham-patriots; no! they are honest, and of course, that being the only criterion, honorable men. Let me ask any of these pocketloyal tradesmen, who, in the matter of excise, bellow about outraged feelings -- invasion of the rights of Englishmen, and such like, in this case, rubbish: permit me just to enquire of them whether they are well pleased to receive a composition upon any of their securities-whether they like to be paid in part? No, every opprobrious epithet that can be mustered is hurled at the head of the, many times, unfortunate debtor. Then why should the Exchequer compound; why receive from them only such part, as they hold it convenient to pay? They are equally, bona fide, indebted to the revenue in the full amount of the impost, as any individual is to them under hand and seal: an attempt to impugn the system under this flimsy mask is merely the howl of knavery, inthe toils of rectitude; pretty much like too many of our would-be-thought conscientious neighbours, who, when they are foiled in every attempt to make a fool of a man, instantly roar out rogue, rague. Have patience, gentle reader, I am not digressing. as will be exemplified below. Let us now bring the Excise officer into the fore ground, shackled with all his disabilities-no interference at elections-every other mode of obtaining subsistence disallowed-Man's days, says David, are all numbered; but an excise officer's hours are divided, and nearly sub-divided-domestication virtually forbid-a hardy and still thrifty plant must be be; or he never could even partially strike root under quartennial transplantation. A detached-an isolated being, yet, if he discharges his duty fully and rigidly. perhaps as independent a man as any in the kingdom. Such is the acting officer on that part of the revenue. Now advance Mr. Surveyor of taxes, alias window peeper .- These beings are amazingly fond of aping the gentleman; they mount the top round of the ladder of civic elevation, they are suffered to carry on divers professions, trades and callings; many of them have two or' three hundred regular customers. These men surely can never have the superlative impudence to repeat the Lord's prayer! Lead us not into temptation --- faith there is no necessity for leading, they have plunged up to the ears on their own accord. In the numerous struggles between duty and interest, I much doubt poor duty is frequently constrained to make a retrogade movement. Frail mortals should not be tempted beyond their strength! That, to be sure, is common-place cant; but it is some of the better sort of it-two or three hundred customers-some of them particularly good ones-see them every week-some every dayboard of taxes at a great distance-know nothing of them personally-never come to the shop-never lay out a farthing with us, &c. &c .-- Oh the odds are fearful! Let us, for example's sake try a single tradesman and tax officer in his bifrontic capacity. Admit, John Dobson to be a man super-eminent in the art and mystery of constructing a MOUSE TRAP, and, as one tradesman may happen to have great good fortune as well as

another, we will further suppose the said John Dobson, by dint of powerful interest, invested with a surveyorship. He deals largely in mouse-traps marked J. D. and largely in surcharges signed John Dobson, Surv. Now, there are certain things in nature which, we are told, hold such violent antipathy to each other, that the same premises cannot possibly contain them. In addition to the catalogue already laid before the public, I have a strong presentiment that a mouse-trap marked J. D. kept in any dwelling-house in John Dobson's division would be the most likely application to effect the extraction of the sting from the tail of any surcharge so signed.* The thing works in an instant-hum-says John, to himself,the gentleman prefers and uses the Dobson mouse trap, I see-hem-hem-my dear Sir-I fancy I must have been imposed upon by that scoundrel of an assessor-Oh he's a stupid dog-all very right I dare say-a mere error in judgment-hem-not the most distant intention of defraud-please to give me that scrawl of a thing againhem - hem - you find that little machine a prime article I dare say-good morning, my dear Sir-good morning. At this juncture a loud voice over my shoulder exclaims. nothing extenuate, or set down aught in malice! On turning my head who should I find but Ned Whirl a Gig. After reciprocal salutations, casting his eye on the paper, ha, says he, amongst gown-men, I can just suit you. Stopping at the old shop at Coventry, this day week, who should bounce in but Quiz Caxen, he seemed to be in a violent pet, and for some time uttered nothing but incoherencies-mushroom-upstart-novice-at length, strikking his clenched fist upon the table, he articulated strongly-" may I perish if I do not attend the hall to morrow, and put peeping Tom in nomination for the next vacant gown!" Oh, for heaven's sake, Ned, Cried I, cease; if you

^{*} Does our correspondent mean to insinuate that the present mayor of the town he mentions is a paltry dealer in mouse traps? If so, we are obliged to inform him that the one occupying the chair there at this time, although he bears the same initials to his name, is a liquor merchant.—En.

do not intend that I shall expire with laughter! In the mayoralty of the right worshipful PEEPING Tom! What a combination of words? Peeping Tom of COVENTRY an ALDERMAN! What sounds!

Newurk, October 14th, 1811.

A TRAVELLER.

NEW ROADS TO MATRIMONY.

SIR,

At the age of fifteen I left my native country for the sultry climate, and swarthy society of Jamaica; and intent only on acquiring the means of returning to England laden with riches, no violent passions interfered with my pursuit of gain, or agitated my bosom with any feeling of unhappiness. My success was rapid and conspicuous, the most wealthy of the planters regarded me with envy, and before I had arrived at my thirtieth year, I was enabled to return to my native land, with a fortune rather proportionate to my industry than necessary to my wants.

For the first season of my residence in town I was content with that distant or casual observation of the fair sex, that may be obtained by lounging in the lobby, or parading in the Park. Appetite prevailed over every softer sentiment, and I was too frequently the prey of those mercenary females whose profession it is to administer to the grosser passions, and to trade in the incentives to profligate lasciviousness. Like other unfortunate dupes I discovered my error when it was almost too late to retrieve it: I learned to regard the "borrowed smiles of harlots", with abhorrence, and began to look forward with ardor to that domestic union which consecrates even the ebullitions of sensual passion; of which the love is unaccompanied by distrust, and the pleasures are unproductive of repentance.

I had heard much of the wit and accomplishments of Miss Fadladinida Godwin; the authoress of several sentimental and philosophical novels, a constant correspondent of the Monthly Magazine, and particularly celebrated for the pathetic beauty of her sonnets. Light reading was my favourite amusement; and I had read with sensations of the most exquisite sympathy, those pages in which she declaims on " the ardor of reciprocal passion," " the sweet union of souls," the " delight of simultaneous extacy," and the "extatic bliss of congenial souls seeking in each other the sources of concentrated sentimentality." Surely, thought 1, the woman who can feel so enthusiastically, and express her feelings with so much energy of language, must be the most amiable and lovely of celestial creatures! My raptures were encreased by the perusal of her verses, which appeared to breathe the spirit of genuine and ardent emotion: as a poetess she was always in raptures: she never elicited a thought, or expressed a sentiment in the easy and natural style of the common classes of versifiers, but every line contained some profound reflection, and some sentiment demanding a pause of astonishment or admiration. Besides she felt so much for the distresses of others, bewailed so sincerely the inequality of mankind, and the miseries of the world, and felt such excruciating pain at the sight of a decayed farm house, a suspended criminal, or a drowned fly, that I could not but ascribe to her, a heart the most susceptible, and sensibility the most exquisite. But my raptures were excited to the highest pitch of extacy, on reading the following exquisite effusion of sentiment, contained in a letter to one of her literary correspondents.

"Your charming epistle, your tender and affectionate expressions of friendship, gave my heart more delight than it has felt of a long time. Oh! my dear Hecky, could I say with truth that our souls are sister souls, how pleased should I be with myself; how sweet the idea of an irresistible sympathy between us!"

To the lovely Fadladinida* therefore I received a formal introduction. She was seated at table, her left elbow resting on her plate, her right hand in the act of conveying a morsel of fowl to her mouth, and her eyes fixed intently on a book, which received a due proportion of her meal. Scarcely had my name been mentioned before she started up in all the majesty of dirt, and brandishing her knife, which she had forgotten to lay aside. she proceeded to testify her rapture at my visit by a kind of hug, between a shake of the hand and an embrace, with which I should have willingly dispensed; exclaiming at the same time; " and is it Mr. Gordon! the friend whom my Hecky so frequently mentioned in her lovely letters; Oh! my dear Sir, how my heart palpitates with emotion! but you have not dined; my dearest mamma will serve you: you, I'm sure have too much generosity not to excuse me, while I conclude the delightful performance of Miss Amelia Byron."

The dinner therefore passed off in a silence interrupted only by occasional exclamations of—How charming! dear delightful Sir John, cruel cruel, Altamira—ah! dear sweet affecting verses, I could read them for ever! unjust prejudice! magisterial cruelty! philosophy how delightful art thou! illustrious Davy! Ah rapture beyond expression! At length, her extacies overcame her taciturnity, and she burst upon ns with a whole chapter from this favorite performance; and as it appears to be in the best style of sentimento-philosophico-sympathetico-politico novel writing, it may afford as much gratification to your readers as to the beauteous Fadladinida.

"The pure ardor of passion, exclaimed Edward, can only be felt by kindred souls; who feel the extatic impulse of simultaneous acknowledgment. Oh, my Emily, how my heart beats in unison with yours, not with gross and tumultuous passion, but with a sacred yet animated glow, that tells me our affections are innocent. Even

^{*} We can testify that the portrait here drawn is no cariculure-En.

thus could I suck thy breath without one thought of brutal contact: so sweet is the coalescence of sentiment. and so superior to vulgar prejudices are minds of philosophical energy. Saying this, he laid his trembling hand upon her agitated bosom, and imprinted a gentle kiss on her ruby lips. Emily was not one of those helpless or affected beings, who shrink from the warm touch of sensibility with affright, or who, the slaves of vulgar prejudice, regard the mere corporal approach of an opposite sex. as contaminating to the mind. She knew that all virtue emanates from the intellect, and while that retains its vigor. the mere matter in which it is enveloped, may be subject to animal sensation, or mechanical action, without any participation of guilt, or any violation of virtuous principles. Though her lips, therefore, by the propulsion of their blood-vessels, mechanically responded to the impression of her lover's, they conveyed no feeling of indecorum to her sensorial powers. At length she answered, "Oh; Edward! could I be sure that you are indeed, what you say, what happiness should we not enjoy. Sweet, sweet, reciprocity of sentiment! 'tis in thee to hallow the most unrestricted intercourse! but, after all, why can't you marry me?" " Loveliest of creatures!" exclaimed Edward, how can a mind so elevated as yours stoop to those mean and sordid ideas, that characterise the majority of yoursex? Believe me! love knows no fetters, and none but those whom no restrictions can bind, believe restrictio necessary. All love, my dear, to be sincere, must be spontaneous; but how can that be spontaneous, which is compulsory. Remember too, my angel! that those who live together in the bonds forged by the priest, afford no evidence of love, because their cohabitation is necessary; but they who, unrestricted by connubial ties, retain their connection, demonstrate that they are attached to each other by love, alone. The male and female blackbird, confined together in the same melancholy cage, become the parents of a numerous offspring, through necessity; but let the door be opened, and let them sing their wood notes wild amongst hundreds of their species, the feather of the male may shiver with desire for a new mistress, and his constancy will only be in proportion to his love." Here his emotion overcame his powers of voice and action: he sunk into the arms of Emily, and Emily made no resistance to his arguments."

Her recitation of this interesting passage gave a peculiar glow of animation to her countenance; she beat time with her foot, her eyes exuded tears of sympathy, and her bosom heaved in convulsive excitation. Just as she had finished the concluding sentence, a crash as of crockery ware interrupted her progress; she started up with the countenance and attitude of a fury, rushed out of the room, proceeded to the scene of destruction, and vented her indignation on the unfortunate cook-maid. Suffice it to say, that among her other accomplishments the art of scolding had not been neglected: she vociferated with the lungs of a lioness, and in the vocabulary of a nymph of Suffolk-street. I could not avoid repeating involuntarily -Philosophy! union of sentiment! and congenial souls! and hastened from the abode of altercation with all possible dispatch.

Disgusted with sentimental sonnetteers, I first tried my fortune among the less accomplished classes, and gradually went the round of polished society. To say any thing more on the subject than that my pursuit was unsuccessful, would be to trespass on your present limits, without affording your readers proportionate satisfaction; nor would the detail be intelligible to such of them as have not before been acquainted with the history of the subjoined circular,* of which I became the dupe, to an extent which you will be able to ascertain from my subsequent correspondence.

"MARRIAGE INSTITUTION, BY MRS. MORRIS,

[&]quot; Next the Chapel, Margaret-street, Cavendish-square.

[&]quot;THE restrained and delicate condition which custom imposes on females subjects them to great disavantages; by this Institution all

^{*} For that history see our first number, page 18. The original is in our possession.

impediments are obviated. Ladies who have fixed their affections but never avowed their prepossession may be instructed how to effect their wishes. Any Gentleman who has formed a predilection for a Lady, may be assisted in obtaining her; those who have yet formed no attachment may have objects pointed out to them. The unions which have already been effected prove how secret and circumspect Mrs. Morris conducts her business, and that she uses means peculiar to herself, and generally successful.

" The applicants pay in the first instance Ten or Twenty Guineas: she raises or lowers her demand according to their condition and ca-

pacity, and gives them an immediate introduction.

"She requires their names, places of residence, and a particular description of their circumstances, without which she cannot serve them; as she attaches a responsibility to her recommendation, and will not introduce persons till she knows them thoroughly.—The secrecy that has all along been observed, is a pledge for her that she can never abuse the confidence placed in her.

" She introduces parties to each other here, or at their own houses.

" When the union takes place she expects two and an half per cent. on their property.

"If the parties do not suit themselves in twelve introductions, they are to repeat their subscriptions, or else they may be only indulging their curiosity without an intention of marriage.

"She does not introduce persons whose characters are not unexceptionable, but if they are rejected they are never exposed."

A BATCHELOR.

THE HYPERCRITIC, No. III. BELL AND LANCASTER, AND THE REVIEWERS.

In the year 1789, a school was opened at Egmont, near Madras, for the orphans and distressed male children of the European military. Dr. Bell, who was then chaplain at that establishment, undertook the superintendence of this charitable institution, for the sake of being more useful in his station than he otherwise could be; he had to work upon the most unpromising materials. It was an established opinion, that the half-cast children were an inferior race, both in moral and intellectual faculties. This opinion was like one of those prophecies which bring about their own accomplishment. Dr. Bell

knew how deeply it was rooted, and saw but too plainly that it rested on apparent experience; he knew also that these children learnt from their unhappy mothers that cunning, selfishness, and deceit, which become the defensive instincts of a despised and degraded generation.

The boys placed under his care, were in general stubborn and perverse; addicted to trick, lying and duplicity; and those among them, who were further advanced in age, were for the most part trained in habits and customs, incompatible with that method, without which no system

of education could proceed.

" I soon found (says he) that if ever the school was to be brought into good order, it must be done, either by instructing ushers in the economy of such a seminary, or by youths from among the pupils trained for the purpose. For a long time, I kept both of these objects in view; but was in the end compelled, after the most painful efforts of perseverance to abandon entirely the former, and adhere solely to the latter. My success, in training my young pupils in habits of strict discipline, and prompt obedience, exceeded my expectation, and every step of my progress, has confirmed and riveted in my mind, the superiority of this new mode of conducting a school, through the medium of the scholars themselves." Experiment, (first Edition, published in 1797). The first attempt which Dr. Bell made to introduce a new practice into the school, proved to him the necessity of proceeding upon this principle, which is in fact the key-stone of the system. Simple as the practice was, he could not fully establish it till he had trained boys, whose minds he could command, and who only knew to do as they were bidden, and were not disposed to dispute or evade the orders given them.

This practice, which is that of teaching the letters in sand, Dr. Bell borrowed from the natives, having at first sight been struck with its simplicity and utility. It is mentioned by Pyrard de Laval, and is noticed in conjunction, even with the principle of Dr. Bell's school, by Pier Della Valle, one of the best, and most amusing of the old writers. "These boys told me (says he) that in

this way (in sand) they learned to read or write without paper, pens, or ink: when I asked who taught them, and who set them right when they were wrong, seeing they were all scholars, and no master among them, they replied very reasonably, that it was not possible the same difficulty should impede them all at the same time, so as to be insurmountable, and for that reason they all learned together, that if one was out, the others might assist him!" It appears from this passage, that even the main principle of the new system might have been discovered in the practice of the Hindoos. Not that this, in the slightest manner, affects the merit of the discoverer; more than the use of monitors among ourselves, or the custom of some of our public schools, of placing a new-comer under the care of a substance whom he attends as a shadow, till he has become familiar with the business of his form. The person who first introduced into the business of a school, the principle, as a principle, of conducting it by means of the scholars themselves, is as much the discoverer of that principle, as Franklin of electricity, or Jenner of vaccination. The facts were known before them. but in an insulated and productive form; they systematized them, and thus communicated to us a new power.

We are sorry that our limits do not permit us to detail these minutiæ of the system. Its principal characteristics, were to make the scholars as far as possible do every thing for themselves, and to make them the judges. the guides, and the directors of each other. Every class had its teacher and assistant chosen from itself. Give me four and twenty children to-day, was a saying of Dr. Bell, and I will give you as many teachers to morrow as you want. The advantage of thus teaching boys, by the agency of boys, was very great. There was no hesitation in degrading a teacher, who failed in any of the tasks required of him, and making trial of another, till one was foundfit for the office: these teachers had no other occupation, no other pursuit; nothing to employ their minds, but this single object: they could do that only which they were assigned to do, and they did it the better, because they themselves knew nothing more than what was perfectly level to the capacities of their pupils. The rule of the school was, that no boy could do any thing right the first time, but he must learn when he first set about it by means of his teacher, so as to be able to do it himself ever after.

An annual saving of not less than 2400 pagodas, or 960%. upon the education of two hundred boys, was produced in the institution at Madras, by Dr. Bell's regulations and improvements. After superintending the school for seven years, he found it necessary for his health to return to Europe. The directors of the charity passed a resolution for providing him with a passage in any ship, which he might wish to sail in; but as he had when he accepted the superintendence of the institution declined all salary or remuneration of any kind, he felt it consistent to refuse this mark of approbation. Before he left India he delivered in a report to the directors of the asylum. Lord Hobart, who was president of the charity, expressed his opinion that the promulgation of a system so good, and so well calculated to promote the purposes of education in general, might be attended with the most beneficial effect: and of such consequence was it deemed by that nobleman, and the other members of the Madras government, that copies of the report were officially sent by them to the governments of Bengal and Bombay, saying that as the Military Male Orphan Asylum has flourished under a system of education altogether new, they were desirous of diffusing the mode of teaching practised there, which they recommended as deserving the attention of those, who interest themselves in the welfare of the rising genera-The report, with the high testimony prefixed, tion. Dr. Bell published on his arrival in Europe, in a little duodecimo volume, under the title of "An Experiment in Education, made at the Male Asylum of Madras, suggesting a System by which a School or Family may teach itself under the superintendence of the Master or Parent," When the manuscript of this little work was put into the hands of the publisher, Dr. Bell said to him, you will think me an enthusiast, but in a thousand years this system of tuition will spread over the world. What he meant by the system is apparent, from the title and the whole tenor of the pamphlet: not merely writing in sand; not syllabic writing, nor any of the improvements in detail, but the main principle and main spring of the whole; "by which a school or family may teach itself under the superintendence of the master or parent," the new mode of conducting a school through the medium of the scholars themselves.

The first place in England where Dr. Bell's discovery was adopted, was the charity school of St. Botolph Aldgate. Dr. Briggs, now of Liverpool, but then of Kendal, was the second person who profited by Dr. Bell's discovery. He introduced it into the Kendal schools of industry, and invented a mode of teaching the letters in sand, which has been adopted without acknowledgement by Mr. Lancaster, by dividing them into three classes according to their shape; the first containing such letters only as are formed of straight lines, viz. 1. H. T. L. E. F; the second composed of angular lines, X. Y. K. A. V. W. M. N. Z.; the third of those which are formed with a curve; U. C. J. G. D. P. B. R. O. Q. S. The account of this classification of the alphabet was printed in the third volume of the Reports for bettering the Condition of the Poor.

At length, in 1803, Mr. Joseph Lancaster, who has since rendered himself so conspicuous, first appeared before the public. He published a pamphlet of sixty-six pages, with this title, "Improvements in Education, as it respects the industrious classes of the community; containing a short account of its present state, hints towards its improvement, and a detail of some practical experiments conducive to that end." "The institution (he says) which a benevolent providence has been pleased to make me the happy instrument of bringing into usefulness was begun in the year 1798. The intention was to afford to the children of mechanics, instruction

in reading, writing and arithmetic, at about half the usual price. During several years I had attempted to introduce a better system of tuition into the school, and every attempt had failed:" shortly afterwards he says " from this time the internal organization of the school was gradually and materially altered for the better"from what time, does not appear. The commencement of the school is distinctly noted, that of the improvements is not: but as the school began in 1798, and the account was published in 1803, the several years during which all his attempts at introducing a better system had failed, would sufficiently prove that the actual improvement was of very recent date, if it was not placed out of all doubt by the statement in a subsequent edition; Mr. Lancaster there says, that when he opened school in 1798 he "knew of no modes of tuition, but those usually in practice." (Third edition, page 1.) He dates the commencement of his free school, supported by subscription at Midsummer 1801, and speaking of the second year's subscription says, " improvements in the modes of tuition had been made to good purpose in these two first years, and a regular system of order established: though a system of order was easily established a new system of tuition was another thing, and to this I found myself most unexpectedly and rapidly advancing." He observes also "the system of rewards and the new method of teaching to spell, are I believe original;" thus refraining from any claim to the great principle of tuition, by boys, which he had adopted. The close of the pamphlet contains a fair acknowledgment of the priority of Dr. Bell's system, in the following words; " I ought not to close my account without acknowledging the obligation I lie under to Dr. Bell, of the Male Asylum at Madras, who so nobly gave up his time and liberal salary, that he might perfect that institution, which flourished greatly under his fostering care. He published a tract in 1798,* "An Experiment, &c." From his publica-

This is a mistake of Mr. L. The tract was published in 1797.

tion I have adopted several useful hints, &c. Dr. Bell had two hundred boys who instructed themselves-made their own pens, &c. I must regret that I was not acquainted with the beauty of his system till somewhat advanced in my plan; if I had known it, it would have saved me much trouble, and some retrograde movements. As a confirmation of the goodness of Dr. Bell's plan, I have succeeded with one nearly similar, in a school attended by almost three hundred children." Page 64.

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This acknowledgment is full, fair and satisfactory; and it is sufficiently plain from Mr. Lancaster's previous accounts of his school, what the hints were, which he had adopted from the Madras experiment. When he tells us that the whole system of tuition is almost entirely conducted by boys, he adds "the writing books are ruled with exactness, and all the writers supplied with good pens, by the same means. In the first instance the school is divided into classes, to each of these a lad is appointed as monitor; he is responsible for the morals, improvement, good order, and cleanliness of the whole class." This acknowledgment of the prior merits of Dr. Bell, was repeated by Mr. Lancaster, in the second edition of his book, published also in 1803; with the subjoined addition. " Dr. Bell was fully sensible of the waste of time in schools, and his method to remedy the evil, was crowned with complete success. I have been endeavouring to walk in his footsteps, in the method about to be detailed." Page 78. In the ensuing year, Mr. Lancaster opened a correspondence with Dr. Bell, and visited him, at Swanage in Dorsetshire, where he then resided; having been presented to the rectory at that place. They had at that time much personal communication upon the subject of tuition, and this was followed by some epistolary intercourse. Meantime, Mr. Lancaster served the cause of education, by giving the new system a notoriety, which Dr. Bell had failed to obtain, not from any default of his own, but from accidental circumstances. He was residing upon his living, vaccinating the parishioners, regulating and superintending the Sunday schools, and performing the duties of his clerical office. It was not possible for him to neglect those duties, and travel as a missionary in the cause; and unless he could have done this, the press was the only means by which he could appeal to the public. Of that means he had availed himself; and his discovery, the principle of the

new system, was before the world.

The circumstance of his being a quaker, was that which most directly contributed to Mr. Lancaster's success: of all sects, that to which he belonged, was the one upon which he could with most certainty rely for liberal and efficient aid; upon all occasions, when money or personal exertion has been required for purposes of unequivocal utility, according to their peculiar tenets, none have been found more liberal, more active, or more unwearied than the quakers. Among them chiefly Mr.Lancaster, in 1801, raised a subscription of 1181. for the first year of his free school, and in the following year, he doubled the amount. His school was then visited by the Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville; and so greatly had he been patronized, that in 1805, his school contained nearly 100 boys; and another for nearly 200 girls, had been established under the care of his sisters. peculiar character contributed not a little to his success. There was nothing in his education, temper, or previous habits of life, which rendered it unpleasant for him to travel about soliciting subscriptions; a thing to which, however meritorious or urgent the motive, men of finer minds usually feel repugnant even when it becomes an act of duty.

But the time was at hand when Mr. Lancaster was destined to appear in his real character. When he published the third edition, 1805, of his "Improvements in Education," he had made so many additions, good, bad and indifferent, (and to what extent the latter predominate our readers shall have in our next number an opportunity of determining for themselves) to the Madras system, that he began to suppose the system itself was his own, and to arrogate to himself the merit of the discovery.

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The plain and unequivocal admission, that Dr. Bell had two hundred boys, who instructed themselves, that his own plan was " nearly similar," and that it would have saved him much trouble, and some retrograde movements, had he been earlier acquainted with it, were now withdrawn, and the assertion was hazarded, that the 'results' of his experiments had been "a new and efficient system of education." Still, however, Dr. Bell was not entirely over-Mr. Whitbread, when he made his speech on the poor laws, distinctly spoke of Dr. Bell as the discoverer; and Mr. Lancaster in his letter to Mr. Whitbread, " acknowledged the obligation he had to Dr. Bell, and wished not to detract from his honor or merit." Shortly afterwards, however, Mr. Lancaster did arrogate to himself, the merit to which Dr. Bell is entitled; for he introduced an advertisement in the newspapers, with the following sentence. "Joseph Lancaster, of the free-school, Borough Road, London, having invented, under the blessing of Divine Providence, a new and mechanical system of education, for the use of schools; feels anxious to disseminate the knowledge of its advantages through the united kingdom." It was offensive enough to see a quack advertise his balm of Quito, by divine providence, as a sanction which was to be had cheaper than the king's patent: but this is the first time, we believe, that an attempt to pilfer another man's reputation has been made in the phraseology of religion.

With the aid of the admirable statement of facts, contained in the last number of the Quarterly Review (a statement which we earnestly recommend to every admirer of luminous argument and temperate discussion), we have brought down the history of the respective progresses of Messrs. Bell and Lancaster, to the assumption of the discovery by the latter. In our next number we shall enter into an examination of the sophistries employed by his friends to evade, (for they cannot attempt to rebut) this evidence; and shall offer some observations on the nature and value of his supposed improvements, and into the mo-

ral and political effects of committing the national education to the guidance of a quietest.

For the details of Dr. Bell's system, the reader is referred to the little analysis of it, which, under the title of " Instructions, for conducting Schools on the Madras system," contains all necessary practical directions. Sufficeit to say, that the means are beautiful, the end certain, the system entire and perfect. Education, observes the reviewer, has been for the first time reduced to a science. individual genius can do has been accomplished by Dr. Bell; but he still " thinks nothing done by him, while anything remains to be done: and he is apprehensive that his system will be sooner carried to its just length, in foreign countries than at home." This apprehension he may now dismiss. The friends of the establishment have been roused; the eagerness which his enemies and theirs have manifested to effect their object, has awakened their attention, and made them perceive the important interests which are at stake. The enemy set up their song of triumph before they had won the field, and their minority dared even to menace the establishment. It is the cackling of the enemies geese, that has alarmed the garrison.

In the mean time, it cannot be denied that the conduct of Mr. Lancaster himself, has been marked by very prominent features of arrogance, meanness and indecorum. He talks in the MorningPost of " suffering his name to be associated with that of Dr. Bell;" and exclaims, in a sentence of which the malignity is as hateful, as the pleasantry is vulgar; " the cry and the shout of Great art thou, O Bell!' (Bel) is to go through the land." His phraseology is not less distinguished by cant, than his conduct by quackery. His progress has been assisted by every variety of stratagem, and every species of newspaper puffing; and we again defy him to disprove that the numerous eulogies on his system, and his person, the details of his progresses through the country, and the accounts of his former visits to Windsor, and his subsequent interviews with the Prince, were written by himself!

MRS. CLARKE, AND CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG.

a sight of the Harald of that day; and I ch

" What great effects arise from trivial things."

That the following correspondence, occasioned by the paragraph preceding it, will be the occasion of further enquiry, and the forerunner of several singular discoveries, we confidently anticipate; and we gladly embrace the opportunity of giving it collectively to the public in a form more correct and ungarbled, than that in which it has before appeared.

T.

Worthing.—Mrs. Clarke, her two daughters, Mr. Best, and Colonel Armstrong, after a sojourn of three months, left this place on Monday.—Morning Herald, Oct. 15.

II.

Putney, October 15.

Mrs. Clarke's compliments to the Editor of the Herald: begs to correct a mistake his people made concerning herself, in his paper of this day. Mr. Best was not with her; but Captain Armstrong and his wife, who is sister to Mr. William Hallet of Berkshire. The age of one daughter is but ten years, consequently no ill-natured allusion can affect her; the other just fifteen, as amiable in every respect as can be wished; begs that in future they will not put in ill-natured remarks on her, which must be considered by the world ill-natured, unjust, and cruel.

III.

No. 2, Leicester Place, Leicester Square.

Sir, Oct. 20.

As I do not take in the Herald, the card of Mrs. Clarke inserted by you, on the 10th instant, escaped my knowledge, until I was informed of its contents by a gentleman who saw it, I have lost as little time as possible.

in procuring a sight of the Herald of that day; and I do, in the most solemn manner, declare, that Mrs. Clarke's statement is a wilful misrepresentation, which can be proved by several persons frequenting her house, and as Mrs. Clarke has thought proper to specify who Mrs. Armstrong is, &c. &c. &c., without informing him you of the actual terms which induced Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong to visit Mrs. Clarke, I beg leave to assure you, that it was in consequence of the promise of an appointment of considerable enolument to be procured through her influence. I have therefore performed my part of the contract, by introducing Mrs. Armstrong to-Mrs. Clarke: it now remains for Mrs. Clarke to perform her promise to me; and I trust the liberal part of mankind will put a fair and proper construction on the error I was led into.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, and very humble servant,

LIEUT. J. ARMSTRONG.*

To this letter, the following observations were prefixed by the editor of the Times.

IV.

We copy a letter with the signature of J. Armstrong, inserted in another morning paper. Whether such a person as this J. Armstrong exists, or the whole is fiction we know not; but this real or imaginary character modestly comes forward, and tells the world, that he introduced hiswife to give the celebrated Mrs. Clarke countenance in her present state of debasement, upon the monstrous and incredible condition, that Mrs. Clarke should, in return, get him a situation of emolument. Our readers will recollect a late trial in India, wherein a horrible monster appeared to have employed his wife in charging a person with an adulterous intercourse with her, in order to extort money from them. This J. Armstrong says, though we do not

^{*} Leicester-place, Leicester-square, was misprinted by the Herald, for West-place, West-square; and Lieut. in the signature inserted by mistake.

believe him, that he put his wife to an equally delicate service, and for a purpose precisely similar, that of extorting emolument for himself.

V

Leicester Place, Leicester Square.

Sir.

It was with great astonishment, I beheld in your paper of yesterday, a letter purporting to be written by me, and stating that I expected some emolument through the medium of Mrs. Clarke. I am not the author of that letter, and I must therefore beg of you, to contradict the same immediately, by the insertion of this. It is now some time since I had any connection with Mrs. Clarke, but it was never for the purposes mentioned in the letter that appeared in your paper.

J. ARMSTRONG.

VI.

No. 2, West Place, West Square, October 22d, 1811.

Trusting to a continuance of the same liberality I have already experienced at your hands, I feel myself under the painful necessity of again addressing you, in consequence of a gross attack on my character in a morning paper of Tuesday last. It is not to be wondered at in so large a metropolis as this is, that there are men, who from their connection with the degraded part of the press, and their situation in life would attempt the character of any individual; but that a respectable paper should lend itself to a person who has evidently dipped his pen in his own gall, to answer some sinister purpose, was cruel and uncalled for. This man of words calls his readers to recollect a trial in India, wherein a horrible monster appeared to have forced his wife to charge respectable characters with an adulterous intercourse with her, in order to extort money for himself. I now call on the public to say how far my introducing my wife to Mrs. Clarke, on the promise of preferment, which my circumstances unfortunately required, and which others

VOL. II.

o a superior rank have sought in the same way before me, is similar to his Indian story! The remark is just wherein he says " none that ever really applied to Mrs. Clarke for promotion addressed themselves to her in this style through a public journal;" nor would I, but I found I had been duped and deceived both by Mrs. Clarke and her bosom friend, who gave me to understand that Mrs. Armstrong was to have met other respectable ladies at Mrs. Clarke's house. It was therefore for no other purpose but to bring me before the public and cover themselves, that the falsehood appeared under Mrs. Clarke's name, and which I was induced to contradict. From what has come within my knowledge, I believe, even now, that Mrs. Clarke has a remnant of interest left, but through what channel I know not, and I equally believe she will only use it for those who can return the compliment. The writer in the paper alluded to, begins his libel on me by "disbelieving that there is such a person:" if he is still of that opinion, let him only do me the favor to give me his address, or to call at my lodgings, and I pledge myself to give him convincing proofs that I am alive to his unmanly attack. I do not pretend to defend my weakness, or my credulity, yet I hope my friends and the world will be convinced that I am not morally guilty, but made the dupe of a designing party.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, And very humble servant,

J. ARMSTRONG.

The first sentiment that the preceding correspondence will excite, is astonishment at the easy and careless tone in which Mrs. Clarke defames the characters of two persons with whom she had so lately been in habits of friendly intercourse. They had " served her turn," and she no longer cared by what disclosures they might be injured. Rather than the public should remain in ignorance of the important circumstance, that she had been able to obtain the sanction of one respectable female, on her tour to

Worthing, she comes forward to proclaim the connection to the world, and to identify the person of Mrs. Armstrong, by informing us that she is sister to Mr. Hallet of Berkshire. After this evidence of her honour and sensibility, we hope that there is no degree of credulity. or ideocy, over which her future machinations can obtain even a momentary ascendancy.

It is more than ludicrous (by the bye) for the writer of a card like that to the Editor of the Herald, to complain of ill-natured observations on her conduct!

But if the conduct of Mrs. Clarke be deserving of public reprobation, it by no means follows that it justifies the resentment of Mr. Armstrong. If he was not ashamed of her society at Worthing, why should he feel so much indignation at the disclosure of their intercourse in a London newspaper? His assertion of the falsehood of Mrs. Clarke's statement, is too indefinite for any useful purpose: he acknowledges that he visited her, in conjunction with his wife, and that he introduced her on condition of receiving a place of emolument; and for what purpose could he introduce her, but to sanction her appearance at the rooms, and among respectable society? The observations of the Times, therefore, are not proved to be incorrect by any thing contained in Mr. Armstrong's letter. He lent his wife to Mrs. Clarke, as a sacrifice to his emolument; and this is all that the Editor asserted.

It is both unjust and cruel, however, for the periodical guides of the privileged orders of society to feel "shocked and surprized" at the conduct of Mr. Armstrong. When we remember the names of the generals, and wives of generals, of the clergymen and daughters of clergymen, who paid their servile court to Mrs. Clarke, in her days of power and splendor, we are apt to suspect that the zeal of the proprietors of the Morning Post has outrun their prudence; and that the indignation of the higher ranks is excited, not in consequence of the immorality of Armstrong's conduct, but because Mrs. Clarke is no longer the mistress of a prince, or because her dependant is poor and friendless. Another week, however, may

restore them to their senses: Dr. O'Meara may then discover, that there is nothing wonderful in Armstrong's credulity; and Mr. Byrne may be convinced that poverty or depression may excuse, in the lieutenant, an act of meanness, which in the wealthy brigadier, or the beneficed doctor, was at once a proof of wickedness and folly.

THEATRICAL REVIEW.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri ; Quo me cunque rapit tempestas deseror hospes.

LYCEUM -Mr. Pocock, the successful author of Hit or Miss, has again appeared before the public as the writer of a farce called the Green-eyed Monster, or How to get your Money. The plot, if a number of incidents combined together deserve that appellation, consisted in the schemes of Mr. Compass (Lovegrove) the ward of Dr. Jaundice Mr. Dowton), to marry his guardian's daughter, and get his fortune out of his hands. It does not appear, however, that there is any occasion for his manœuvres, which were neither rationally designed, nor probably conducted. All his objects are effected by the seizure of his guardian's strong box, and the other scenes, regarded only as conducive to his purposes, might as well have been omitted. Though many of the witticisms are original, and one or two detached scenes are not deficient in sprightliness of dialogue, nor in the other requisites of a funny piece, it has been received with so much coldness by the public, that we have not been enabled to witness it a second time. Its failure is at least as discreditable to the public as the unexampled success of Hit or Miss: but Matthews is a favorite; and an inferior genius like Mr. Pocock must be indebted to the actor for more than a moiety of his temporary fame.

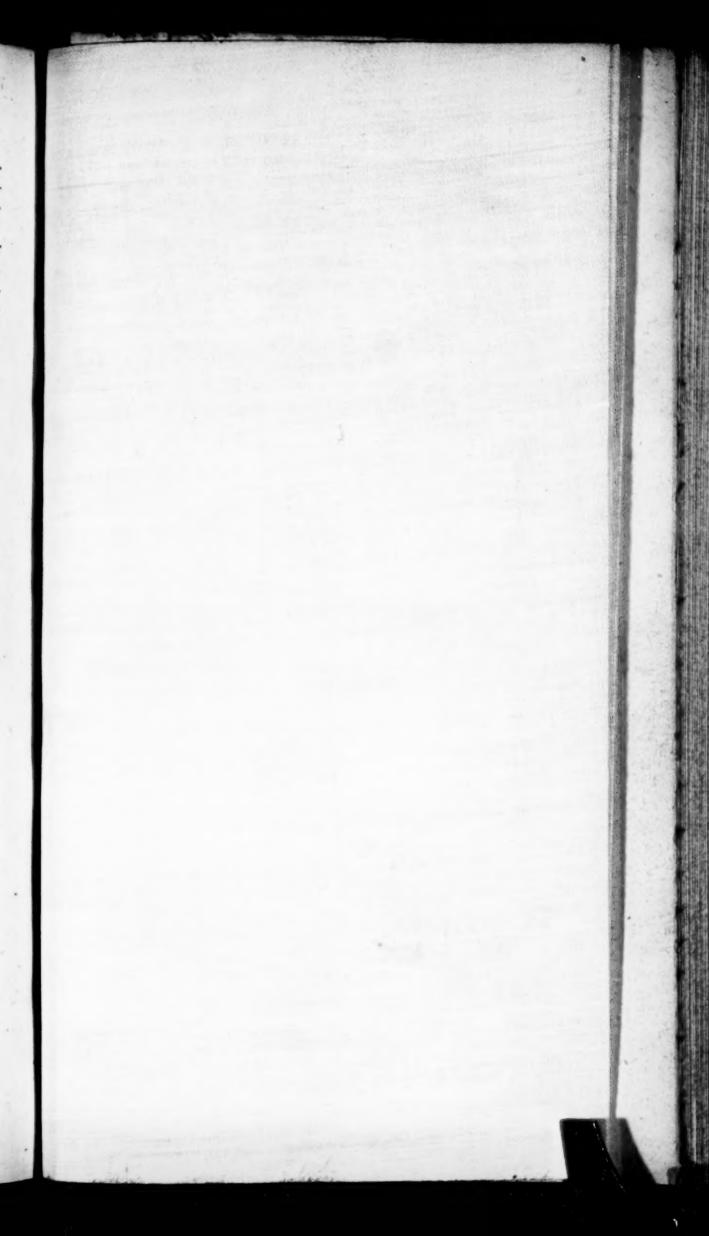
COVENT GARDEN.—It is seldom that we are gratified with an opportunity of indulging in praise, at once so just and so unlimited, as that which is due to the excellence of Mr. Sinclair. His natural accomplishments are fully equal to those of Braham; and while he possesses nearly an equal knowledge of the science of music, he is perfectly free from his affectation and his pedantry. His voice is clear, melodious, and powerful: his articulation sonorous and distinct: in his easier efforts, he is natural and pleasing; and in the most difficult passages, he delights the common auditor by his facility, while he gratifies the man of science by his skill. His ornaments do not encumber, but embellish; like the flowers of a Corinthian capital, they bear a just proportion to the structure they are designed to decorate; and never overload the building they were intended to adorn. With all Braham's excellence, it cannot be denied that he is remarkable for the faults which Mr. Sinclair has avoided; that his ornaments are exuberant and fantastic, and that in attempting to astonish, he frequently loses the power to delight.

The action of Mr. Sinclair is exactly of that kind from which a critic would augur the susceptibility of improvement. He has no confirmed habits, or studied peculiarities, and we have therefore great hopes, that with the assistance of the dancing and fencing masters, his person may be formed to some degree of elegance and grace. The awkwardness of the generality of singers, is rendered peculiarly disgraceful by the facility with which their deficiencies might be supplied and their faults corrected. We have no doubt that either Smith or Horn might obtain a tolerable share of ease and elegance, by three months attendance upon D'Egville and Angelo; and to look like a gentleman rather than a pick-pocket or a taylor, is surely not unworthy of a vocal performer's ambition,

Miss Feron has long been a favorite with the provincial critics, and among the amateurs of Vauxhall and the Surrey Theatre. The obtuse sensations of the manufacturers of Birmingham are more certainly excited by obtrusive brilliance, than by the chaste display of natural talent and unaffected excellence: at Vauxhall the unfortunate songstress must contend in loudness with the noise of the croud, the clangor of the instrument, and the roaring of the wind; and at the Surrey Theatre she must address herself to an audience, more easily interested by bustle, than delighted by taste, or elegance, or sensibility. Miss Feron, in her dramatic character, displays no symptoms of feminine sensibility, or juvenile naïveté: as an actress she goes through her part in a business-like manner; in the part of Floretta, she displayed the regular quantum of activity and vivacity, yet she excited but little interest in comparison with many predecessors who entertained a much less accurate conception of the character, and whose powers were much less adapted to its personation. Her great defect is want of expression; she satisfies the judgment but never interests the feelings; she has too much of the actress and too little of the woman; and the spectator remembers ber with as little sympathy as a paste-board puppet, of which he had admired the evolutions with surprize at their correctness. Her figure is inclined to the en bon point; her manner neither awkward nor constrained, but not distinguished by elegance or ease; and without considering her vocal accomplishments, her excellence is rather negative than positive, consisting more in the absence of deformities than in the possession of actual beauties.

As a singer her qualifications are more deserving of praise. Her voice is powerful without compass, and musical without sweetness. When she endeavours with more ambition than prudence to convince her hearers that she is not inferior to Catalani, her tones approach to shrillness, and instead of flowing in a full majestic streams of harmony, which expands the soul while it delights the ear, it partakes of the piercing discontinuous loudness of a whistle. Catalani reaches the higher notes with facility, and so does Miss Feron: in the same manner, the course of the Paddington canal is full and regular; yet who ever thought of comparing the current of a water pipe to the eternal and majestic flow of the Thames or the Ganges?

We most earnestly exhort Miss Feron to desist from attempts, of which the only characteristic is temerity: she must not imagine that because the boors of Yorkshire were pleased to call her the English Catalani, she will ever be mistaken for any thing better than a third-rate singer: by the loftiness of her pretensions she may provoke the critics into a denial of that praise to which she is justly entitled, and it is better to fill respectably that determinate station for which she was intended by nature, than to fail in the objects of her misplaced ambition, and subject herself to comparisons which can only excite the wonder of the audience at the disproportion between her efforts and her powers.





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OR THE WORSHIPPERSAT WANS